FORGED IN VIETNAM:

THE 377TH COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP, 1966-1973

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ABSTRACT

This narrative history explores the experience of the 377th Combat Support Group, later designated the 377th Air Base Wing, during its service in the Vietnam War from its activation at Tan Son Nhut Air Base on 8 April 1966 to its inactivation on 28 March 1973. It is a story that serves as a microcosm of the American war effort, mirroring the strategic shifts from massive military buildup, through major conventional conflict, to the eventual policy of Vietnamization and withdrawal. Drawing upon declassified unit histories and after-action reports, as well as personal narratives, and news archives, it details the 377th's foundational role in operating and defending Tan Son Nhut, a critical strategic center of gravity for American airpower in South Vietnam. Key events analyzed in depth include the unit's baptism by fire in the Viet Cong ground and mortar attacks of 1966; the pivotal and successful defense of the base against a large-scale enemy assault during the 1968 Tet Offensive; its subsequent adaptation to persistent rocket attacks; the transformation of its mission to support Vietnamization; and its final evolution into a full-fledged wing that played a direct role in repelling the 1972 Easter Offensive. Through this lens the 377th was not merely a support unit but a critical enabler and, when tested, a front-line combatant whose actions had a decisive tactical impact on the war, leaving a legacy of resilience, adaptation and valor.

PREFACE

The air over Saigon in the mid-1960s was a soupy, indivisible mixture of heat, humidity, and the acrid tang of jet fuel. For the thousands of young Americans arriving in-country, their first breath was a physical blow. The roar of the transport's still-running engines was lost in a greater cacophony: the scream of fighter jets taking off, the guttural drone of C-130s taxiing in endless procession, the rhythmic—*whump-whump-whump*—of helicopters lifting off from pads that shimmered in the haze, and the ceaseless clamor of construction. This was Tan Son Nhut, and it was the deafening, chaotic, and indispensable heart of the American war in Vietnam.

By 1966, the base had become a sprawling, schizophrenic metropolis of war. It was at once a vital organ of American military power and a glaringly vulnerable target, an island of immense logistical and technological might situated on the doorstep of a hostile and unsecured capital city. To an extent that few other installations could claim, Tan Son Nhut was the American war effort's strategic center of gravity. It was home to Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), the operational command for all U.S. forces in the country, and more critically for the air war, it housed the headquarters of Seventh Air Force. From hardened command bunkers buried beneath the red soil, generals and their staffs planned and directed every bombing run, every reconnaissance mission, and every airlift sortie in the theater.

Simultaneously, the base was the primary aerial port of debarkation, the main artery connecting the United States to the battlefield. The torrent of men and materiel was relentless. Its runways, which had been designated 'the busiest in the world,' were the conduit for Military Airlift Command's strategic transports, while its sprawling aprons served as the primary hub for the tactical airlift fleet that fanned out across the country, delivering the ammunition, food, and mail that sustained American armed forces at their most remote outposts. Reconnaissance jets, electronic warfare platforms, and special operations aircraft all staged from its crowded flight lines. To attack Tan Son Nhut was to attack a critical part of the brain, the heart, and the spine of the American military machine all at once.

To manage this controlled chaos—to be the landlord, the provider, the operator, and the defender of this vital piece of strategic geography—the Air Force activated the 377th Combat Support Group (CSG) on 8 April 1966. Pulled together from other units and given an immense portfolio of responsibility, the 377th was tasked with everything from running the airfield and housing its 40-odd tenant units to defending its vast, porous perimeter from an enemy that was never far away. The men of the 377th were the civil engineers, the supply clerks, the "port dawgs" of the cargo yards, the cooks, and, most critically, the Security Police who patrolled the wire. Theirs was not the celebrated story of the fighter pilot or the

infantryman, but their role was no less essential. They were an indispensable foundation upon which the entire edifice of American airpower in South Vietnam was built.

This work is the story of that unit and the Airmen who executed its mission. It follows the 377th from its frenetic inception through its baptism by fire; from the crucible of the 1968 Tet Offensive, where its Security Police faced down an enemy battalion and saved the base, to the long, methodical years of the American withdrawal. The story of the 377th—its triumphs, its losses, its transformation from a support group to a combat wing, and its final, somber inactivation—was a microcosm of the American war in Vietnam. It is a story of immense effort and innovation, of bravery under fire, and of the complex, often thankless, duty of sustaining a modern military force at war, and is articulated directly from the perspective of those who ran it—the Airmen of the 377th Combat Support Group.

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Part 1:

'The Busiest Airport in the World'

"THIS IS AN EXTREMELY HAZARDOUS POST. THE SECURITY POLICEMAN MUST BE ALERT AT ALL TIMES."

- SPECIAL SECURITY INSTRUCTION NO. 21, 377 SPS, 1 OCTOBER 1967.

It has been said that war is a business of real estate, and in the spring of 1966, Tan Son Nhut Air Base was indeed prime real estate for the American war effort in Vietnam. More than this, it was an organism consuming itself; the logistical maw of a war undergoing a profound and explosive transformation—the "Americanization" of the conflict. For the tens of thousands of young soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines deployed to Vietnam, their journey from home to theater culminated on its tarmac. The rear ramp of a C-141 Starlifter would grind open, and the hermetically sealed, refrigerated air of the transport—a last, fleeting vestige of the world they had left behind—would instantly vanish. It was replaced by a solid wall of heat that rose from the concrete in shimmering waves, a suffocating blanket woven of jet fuel, diesel exhaust, vegetation, and the unidentifiable miasma of an overburdened city.

Many described the noise as a ceaseless, brain-rattling roar. The scream of F-4 Phantoms clawing their way into the sky with full bomb loads, their afterburners searing the air; the guttural drone of C-130 Hercules transports, the pack mules of the air war, taxiing in endless procession; the rhythmic, chest-thumping of Huey and Chinook helicopters lifting off from pads that dotted the landscape; and, underlying it all, the incessant clamor of heavy machinery. This was not merely an air base; it was a self-contained universe of war, what one newly arrived airman would later describe as a spectacle of sheer "controlled chaos."

The chaos, however, had been rapidly overwhelming the base host unit. Tan Son Nhut had not grown so much as it had metastasized, a frenetic accretion of men, machines, and materiel that threatened to collapse under its own weight. The modest colonial aerodrome of a decade prior, built by the French for a different era and a different

kind of war, had been utterly consumed by the insatiable demands of a superpower's expeditionary force. Its infrastructure, engineered for a fraction of the current load, groaned under the strain. The flight lines were a spectacle of organized pandemonium. Aircraft were parked wingtip-to-wingtip on every conceivable inch of concrete, spilling onto hastily graded dirt patches that turned to viscous mud in daily torrential rains. The ramps and taxiways were a perpetual Gordian knot of vehicles: massive Oshkosh fuel trucks, MJ-1 :jammer" bomb loaders, forklifts piled high with pallets of C-rations and ammunition, and ubiquitous "follow-me" jeeps all jockeying for position in a ballet of near-collisions. The official history of the period, written in the dry understatement of military documents, noted that Tan Son Nhut was "severely congested, with facilities strained far beyond their original design capacity."

Tan Son Nhut Air Base, South Vietnam, ca. 1960s
(USAF Photo)

For the men who worked and lived there, the conditions were even more primitive. The torrent of incoming personnel had long ago swamped the handful of permanent barracks. The solution was a sprawling, squalid metropolis of canvas known simply as “Tent City.” Here, thousands of airmen lived in long, neat rows of olive-drab tents, baked by the equatorial sun and periodically inundated by the monsoon rains. The red laterite dust, a fine, brick-colored powder, was a constant plague. It coated everything, turning to a clinging, inescapable mud that stained uniforms, fouled equipment, and found its way into food and bedding. Office space was a similarly precious commodity; commanders and clerks worked from makeshift plywood shacks and repurposed shipping containers, their paperwork vibrating on their desks from the constant thunder of the flight line just yards away. The electrical grid was a fragile, jury-rigged affair prone to frequent blackouts, while the water and sewer systems were strained to the breaking point, a constant, low-grade sanitation crisis in the making.

The organization tasked with presiding over this maelstrom, the 6250th Combat Support Group, was simply drowning. It was a unit conceived for the earlier, smaller advisory footprint of the early 1960s, and the sheer velocity of the American buildup had rendered it functionally obsolete. It lacked the manpower, the command structure, and the resources to cope. The Seventh Air Force, itself headquartered amidst the pandemonium, recognized that the situation was untenable. The very hub upon which its entire air campaign depended was at risk of grinding to a halt from its own internal friction. A new organization, with a more robust structure and a clear, empowered mandate was desperately needed.

On 8 April 1966, that mandate was given form. In a ceremony that was likely lost in the daily din of operations, the 377th Combat Support Group was officially activated, absorbing the mission, personnel—and a mountain of problems from the 6250th. Command of this new entity was given to Colonel George Budway, a man who now found himself shouldering one of the most thankless and brutally difficult jobs in the theater. His mission was not to fly and fight, but to make it possible for everyone else—the forty-odd tenant units already on base and the thousands more personnel yet to come—to do so. He was, in effect, the new city manager, chief engineer, port authority, and police commissioner of the most vital, and most dysfunctional city in South Vietnam.

His inheritance was a litany of crises. The Civil Engineering Squadron faced the monumental task of not just maintaining the failing infrastructure but launching a massive construction program—a “concrete revolution”—to build permanent barracks, hardened aircraft revetments, and proper operational facilities. The Supply squadron had to manage

a logistics chain that stretched from warehouses in the United States to the muddy foxholes of a distant firebase, all of it funneling through their frantic, overcrowded yards. The Transportation Squadron had to impose order on the vehicular chaos, while the Services Squadron was responsible for the morale and welfare of every Airman, a mission that began with the Herculean task of providing a hot meal and a clean, dry place to sleep. And enveloping all of this was the mission of the Air Police, who were now charged with defending a vast, ill-defined perimeter from an enemy who had already demonstrated both the capability and the intent to strike at the heart of the base. Colonel Budway's group was not merely taking over a mission; it was being commanded to tame a force of nature, and to do so while the storm of war gathered on the horizon.

Tan Son Nhut Air Base pedestrian entry control point, ca. 1971.

(USAF Photo)

Part 2:

Baptism by Fire

"SEVEN AMERICANS DIED AND 34 WERE WOUNDED WEDNESDAY NIGHT IN A VIET CONG MORTAR ATTACK ON TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE."

- THE TIMES-PICAYUNE (NEW ORLEANS), NEWS CLIPPING, 13 APRIL 1966.

For the airmen of the newly-christened 377th Combat Support Group, the first week of their existence was a frantic exercise in administrative triage. They were engaged in the mundane but with the essential business of establishing a command: conducting inventories of inherited assets, untangling jurisdictional responsibilities, and trying to impose a semblance of order on the sprawling chaos of Tan Son Nhut. The war, for a fleeting moment, was an abstraction—a roar on the flight line, a destination for the endless convoys, a set of coordinates on a map in the Seventh Air Force command post. The immediate struggle was against a bureaucracy and a logistical nightmare. However, that illusion of distance was shattered just before midnight on the 13 April 1966, when the war arrived with a percussive, deafening roar.

The attack was as sudden as it was vicious. It was not a probe or a harassing volley, but a concentrated and well executed assault designed to inflict maximum physical and psychological damage. From concealed positions in the rice paddies and villages that pressed against the base's western perimeter, Viet Cong mortar crews began to walk a barrage of heavy 81mm rounds across the most valuable and vulnerable sections of the airfield. The incoming shells sounded like a freight train tearing through the night sky, their explosions lighting up the flight line in strobing, hellish flashes. Sirens blared across the base, their rising and falling wail punctuated by the sickening crump of impacts. Men scrambled from their new barracks and squalid tents, diving for the flimsy protection of shallow trenches and sandbagged revetments, the choking smell of cordite filling the air.

The mortar crews were disciplined and their aim was exceptional. They were not firing blindly. Their targets were the long, exposed lines of aircraft parked on the ramps—the fat, slow-moving transports that formed the backbone of the airlift fleet. A C-54 Skymaster, a four-engine giant, erupted in a blossom of orange flame, the fire feeding on its full load of

aviation fuel. The after-action reports, written in the cold, precise language of military bureaucracy, would later catalogue the damage: two C-54s and one C-47 transport utterly destroyed; eight other aircraft, including more transports and several smaller O-1 Bird Dog observation planes, riddled with shrapnel and suffering major damage. The VC had also targeted the base's fuel supply, setting a 50,000-gallon rubber fuel bladder ablaze, sending a thick, greasy column of black smoke billowing into the night sky, a funeral pyre visible for miles. The attack was a devastatingly effective demonstration of the enemy's capability. Just five days into its official existence, the 377th had been dealt a staggering blow.

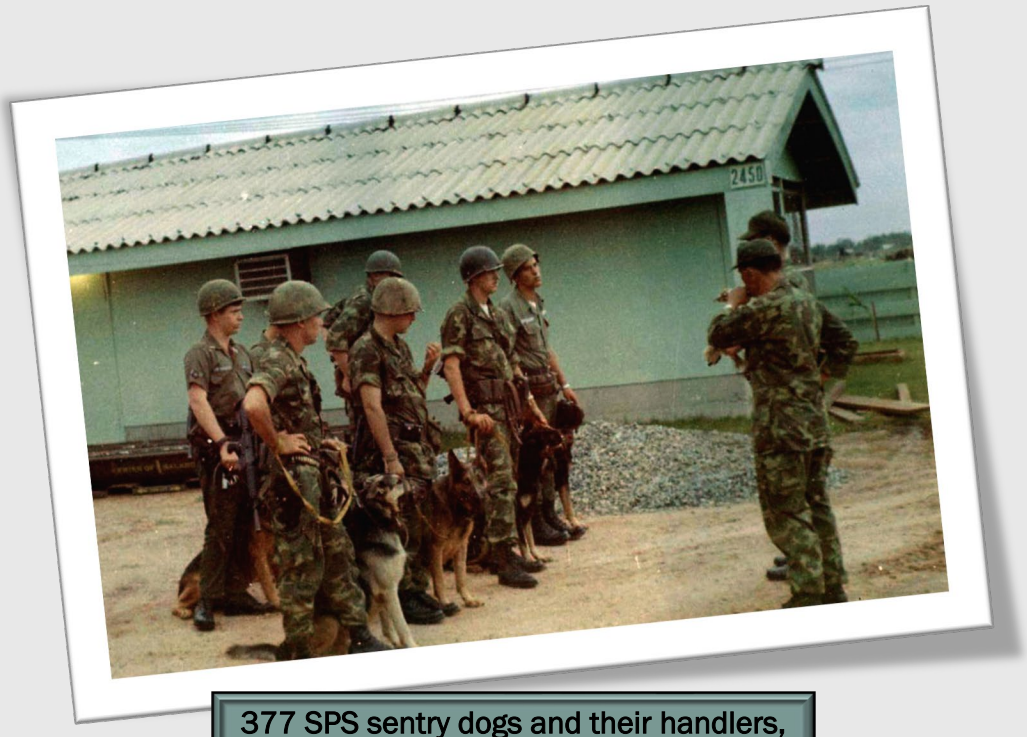
Aftermath of 13 Apr 1966 attack. (USAF Photo)

The human cost was even more severe. The attack killed six American servicemen and wounded more than thirty others, with news reports later updating the death toll to seven. The base's Air Police and Quick Reaction Teams responded with suppressive fire, spraying the dark perimeter with machine-gun and rifle fire, but their enemy was a ghost, melting back into the night as quickly as they had appeared. By the time the last mortar fell and a semblance of quiet returned, the scale of the disaster was clear. The 377th's "baptism by fire" was not a metaphor; it was a literal trial by explosion and flame.

TSN flightline following 13 Apr 66 attack. (USAF Photo)

The months that followed were a frantic race to harden the base. But even as the engineers poured concrete and the security police refined their defense plans, the enemy was preparing to strike again. The next major assault, on the night of 4 December 1966, was different. It was more sophisticated, more daring, and aimed at an even closer, more personal level of terror. This time, the mortars were not just a tool of destruction, but a screen for a ground assault. Specially trained Viet Cong sapper teams, clad in black and armed with satchel charges and automatic weapons, breached the perimeter wire under the cover of the bombardment. Their objective was to get onto the flight line itself and destroy aircraft up close.

They almost succeeded. What stopped them was not a wall of concrete, but a combination of human vigilance and the ferocious loyalty of the 377th Air Police K-9 unit. In one sector, a German Shepherd named Nemo, on patrol with his handler, Airman Robert Thorneburg, alerted on the sappers moving through the darkness. Before Thorneburg could react, the dog charged into the enemy. Nemo's attack, a whirlwind of canine fury, bought his handler the critical seconds he needed to call for reinforcements. Nemo was shot, the bullet tearing through his eye and muzzle, but even grievously wounded, he crawled to his handler's side, guarding him until help arrived. In other sectors, the dogs were not so fortunate. Three other sentry dogs—Tippie, Blackie, and King—were killed in action that night, dying as they attacked the sappers and alerted their handlers to the breach.



377 SPS sentry dogs and their handlers, ca. 1960s
(USAF Photo)

The ensuing firefight was a chaotic, close-quarters affair fought in the darkness between aircraft revetments and supply depots. Air Policemen, like those praised in an after-action awards citation for having “exposed themselves to heavy enemy fire,” rallied to repel the intruders. The battle raged for hours. Major Metcalf Fox, an operations officer, repeatedly braved the incoming fire to rally the defenders and direct their fire, an act of conspicuous courage that would earn him the Silver Star. When the sun rose, the evidence of the night’s battle was stark: the bodies of several sappers lay on the tarmac, along with the tragic loss of the sentry dogs and several American casualties. But the flight line, though scarred, was secure. The attack had been repulsed.

These two attacks, in April and December of 1966, were a brutal education. They proved beyond any doubt that Tan Son Nhut was not a rear area. It was a frontline bastion, and for the men of the 377 CSG, the war was at their doorstep. Their primary mission was no longer just to support the war effort, but to defend it.

Part 3:

The Concrete Revolution

"FROM TWENTY-SEVEN FEET, ONE HAD A CONSTANT VIEW OF THE CONCERTINA WIRE THAT SEPARATED US FROM THE WAR... MOST OF THE TIME IT WAS SHEER BOREDOM, BUT THERE WERE MOMENTS OF SHEER TERROR."

- AIRMAN PENLEY, 377 SPS

The brutal lessons of 1966, delivered by mortar tube and sapper's satchel charge, fundamentally altered the mission of the 377 CSG. Survival was now co-equal with support. The urgent mandate passed down from Seventh Air Force and embraced by the group's new commander as of October, Colonel Grover K. Coe, was to transform Tan Son Nhut from a vulnerable, temporary encampment into a hardened, defensible fortress. This triggered an engineering and construction effort of monumental scale, a desperate race to build defenses faster than the enemy could devise ways to penetrate them. It was a period that came to be known as the "Concrete Revolution."

The most visible and vital element of this revolution was the effort to protect the base's most valuable assets: its aircraft and its people. The images of burning C-54s from the April attack were seared into the unit's institutional memory. In response, the 377th's Civil Engineering Squadron embarked on a massive project to construct protective aircraft revetments. These were thick, U-shaped walls of concrete and steel, sometimes reinforced with earth-filled bins, designed to shield a parked aircraft on three sides. While they couldn't stop a direct hit, they could absorb the blast and shrapnel from a nearby mortar or rocket impact, preventing a single explosion from starting a chain reaction of destruction down a line of fully fueled aircraft. Day and night, the engineers and their contractor crews poured rivers of concrete, and the metallic clang of steel plates being welded into place became another layer in the base's ceaseless soundtrack. Slowly, methodically, the exposed, vulnerable rows of planes began to disappear into the relative safety of their concrete cocoons.

Bunker at Tan Son Nhut, ca. 1960s
(USAF Photo)

An equally urgent priority was getting the Airmen out of the mud of Tent City. The solution was “Project Turnkey,” a program to construct dozens of multi-story, pre-fabricated concrete barracks. These were not luxurious accommodations, but stark, functional blocks of rooms. Compared to the tents, however, they were palaces. They offered the unbelievable luxuries of a solid roof, air conditioning to ward off the oppressive heat, and, most importantly, walls of concrete that promised a degree of safety from flying shrapnel. For the thousands of men who moved from canvas to concrete, the change was a profound boost to morale and a tangible sign of progress. It was a small, but deeply significant, reclamation of civilization and security in the midst of chaos.

Yet, even as the base was being physically hardened, the psychological atmosphere remained one of constant, low-grade tension. The enemy was always out there, in the villages and treelines that bordered the perimeter, and the threat of attack was a permanent feature of life. This reality was most keenly felt by the men of the newly minted 377th Security Police Squadron. For them, the war was a nightly vigil, a long, tense watch from the guard towers and bunkers that studded the perimeter wire. In a personal narrative, one

Security Policeman, a man named Penley, described his world from the vantage point of his guard tower, a steel box twenty-seven feet above the ground. He recounted long hours of stifling boredom, staring out into an impenetrable darkness, punctuated by moments of pure, cold terror. He described the unique, visceral fear of a mortar attack while in the tower—the sudden, shrieking whistle, the gut-wrenching uncertainty of its trajectory, and the violent shaking of the entire structure as the ordnance impacted nearby.

377 CSG Hooches at TSN, ca. 1968
(USAF Photo)

Life for the rest of the 377th's personnel was a delicate balance of routine and readiness. For the "Port Dawgs" of the Aerial Port Squadron, the flight line was their factory floor, and they worked it around the clock. An airman named Curie, who served in the squadron, remembered the relentless pace—twelve-hour shifts in the crushing heat, wrestling with massive cargo pallets, the constant pressure to get aircraft loaded and launched. He also recalled the terror of the sirens wailing during a rocket attack, the mad scramble for cover on a wide-open expanse of concrete with nowhere to hide, and the duty to stand up moments later, often amidst the smoke of nearby fires, and get back to work.

Through it all, the Group's leadership tried to foster a sense of normalcy, an echo of life back in "the World." The Services Squadron made a colossal effort to provide moments of respite. The Christmas menus from 1966 and 1967 were artifacts of this struggle. In a war zone, they offered traditional holiday feasts of roast turkey, glazed ham, and pumpkin pie, complete with festive greetings from the commander. It was a small, symbolic gesture, but it represented a powerful defiance against the dehumanizing pressures of the war.

As 1967 drew to a close, a new commander, Colonel Farley E. Peebles, took charge of the 377th. He inherited a base that was vastly more secure than it had been a year prior. The concrete had been poured, the defenses were in place, and the Security Police, guided by detailed new Special Security Instructions for every sector of the wire, were more prepared than ever. Yet, an ominous quiet had settled over the area. Intelligence reports spoke of significant enemy movement and a major offensive in the making. The lull felt less like peace and more like a held breath. The airmen of the 377th, now living in their concrete barracks and working behind their hardened revetments, waited. The fortress they had built was about to face its greatest test.

377 SPS bunker, TSN, ca. 1960s. (USAF Photo)

Part 4:

The Battle for Tan Son Nhut

"THEY ARE COMPLETELY INSIDE THE BASE, THEY'RE ALL AROUND THIS POSITION, WE'RE RUNNING LOW ON AMMO, ONE MAN DEAD AND TWO BADLY INJURED."

- SGT LOUIS FISCHER'S RADIO TRANSMISSION FROM BUNKER 051 AT 0354-HRS ON 31 JAN 1968

In the final hours of 30 January 1968, a deceptive calm settled over Tan Son Nhut. The Lunar New Year, Tet, was the most sacred of Vietnamese holidays, and both sides had declared a truce. But for weeks, intelligence had been painting a grim picture. Reports spoke of an unprecedented buildup of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army units moving into position around Saigon. On the night of the 30th, those reports became a terrifying reality as coordinated attacks erupted across the country. At Tan Son Nhut, the men of the 377th waited, in a "tense quiet," as one commander called it—stretched to its breaking point. They knew the attack was not a matter of if, but when.

The 'when' came at 0324-hours on the morning of 31 January. The battle for Tan Son Nhut began not with a gradual escalation, but with a sudden, overwhelming convulsion of violence. A storm of 122mm rockets and heavy mortars slammed into the base, a barrage of high explosives that tore through buildings and cratered the tarmac. This was not just another stand-off attack—but rather the overture of a major offensive. As the explosions walked across the base, three battalions of Viet Cong regulars, more than a thousand hardened soldiers, surged forward from their concealed positions, their primary axis of attack aimed directly at the western perimeter.

Their immediate objective was a critical entry point to the airfield, Gate 051, and the small, sandbagged concrete bunker that guarded it, known simply as Bunker 051. Inside that bunker, a small team of Security Policemen from the 377 SPS stared into the darkness

as the world exploded around them. Suddenly, their sector of the perimeter fence erupted in a massive explosion as sappers blew a gap in the wire. The raw, unfiltered chaos of the next few minutes is preserved forever in the frantic, clipped language of the Security Police radio net.

The first call from Bunker 051 was a desperate warning. “They are coming through the gate! They are coming through the gate!”

The voice on the other end, from the Central Security Control (CSC), was steady, demanding information. “How many? How many are there?”

The reply was ragged and breathless. “Hundreds! There are hundreds of them!”

For the five men in that bunker—Sgt William J. Cyr, Sgt Louis H. Fischer, Sgt Charles E. Hebron, Sgt. Alonzo C. Coggins and Sgt Roger B. Mills—the next few minutes were an act of supreme, desperate bravery. They were the finger in the dike. Facing a human wave of enemy soldiers pouring through the breach, they stood their ground, their M16 rifles and M60 machine gun blazing into the oncoming assault. Their furious, desperate fire accomplished something of vital military importance: it slowed down the enemy. The Viet Cong plan relied on shock and speed, on bursting through the perimeter and fanning out across the flight line before an effective defense could be mounted. The ferocious resistance from that one, lone bunker stalled the initial wave, forcing the attackers to pile up at the breach and engage in a close-quarters firefight. It bought the base priceless minutes.

The radio log tells the story of those minutes. A voice from the bunker, strained with exertion: “We’re running low on ammo, one man dead, two badly injured.”

Security Police Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs) were dispatched, racing across the base in jeeps and armored vehicles, their tires screeching on the pavement as they maneuvered around smoking craters. The personal narrative of Bill McKegney, a Security Policeman on duty that night, captures the sensory overload—the nonstop roar of explosions, the tracer rounds of every color streaking across the sky, the smell of gunpowder, the screams on the radio. He remembered hearing those last, desperate calls from the men in Bunker 051.

Then, there was only silence. The bunker, a focal point of enemy fire, took a direct hit from a rocket-propelled grenade.

Yet the sacrifice of its Defenders was not in vain. The time they had bought was just enough. The QRTs arrived, slamming into the flank of the stalled Viet Cong assault. U.S. Army units, who happened to be on the base preparing to deploy to other parts of Saigon, were redirected into the fray, their armored personnel carriers adding heavy machine-gun fire to the desperate defense. It was a chaotic, swirling battle fought in the pre-dawn darkness among the hardened aircraft revetments and maintenance buildings. It was not just the Security Police who fought; it was an "all hands on deck" battle. As one report noted, mechanics, clerks, and civil engineers grabbed M16s from armories and formed ad-hoc defensive lines, protecting their own work areas. The 377 CSG had become a combat unit in fact, as well as in name.

377 SPS engaged in a firefight with enemy combatants on the TSN perimeter. (USAF Photo)

As the sun began to rise, its first light filtered through a thick pall of smoke to reveal a scene of carnage. The main enemy assault was broken. The VC who had penetrated the perimeter were being systematically hunted down and eliminated. The flight line, though damaged and littered with the debris of battle, was secure. In the end, the enemy had failed to achieve a single one of their primary objectives. They had not seized the runways, they

had not destroyed the command-and-control facilities, and they had not sparked the hoped-for uprising. The battle for Tan Son Nhut's real estate was a staggering tactical victory for the United States, and the credit belonged squarely to the men of the 377th Security Police, who had faced down an overwhelming force and held the line. The cost, however, was written in the smoking ruins of Bunker 051.

Part 5:

The Heroes of Tet

"THE 377TH SECURITY POLICE SQUADRON DISTINGUISHED ITSELF BY EXTRAORDINARY GALLANTRY... IN REPELLING AN ALL-OUT ATTACK BY A LARGE, WELL-ARMED ENEMY FORCE."

- SEVENTH AIR FORCE NEWS RELEASE, ANNOUNCING THE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION, 15 APRIL 1970.

The dawn of 31 January 1968 broke over a landscape of ruin. As the last pockets of resistance were silenced and the adrenaline of combat began to subside, the men of the 377th could finally take stock of the night's events. The western perimeter was a shattered tableau of war, a grim testament to the ferocity of the fighting. The bodies of Viet Cong soldiers lay strewn across the ground, testament to a failed assault. But the cost of victory was most poignantly and tragically embodied in the wreckage of Bunker 051. The small concrete and sandbagged fortification had been transformed into a tomb, a blackened and broken monument to the men who had held it to the last.

Bunker 051, TSN AB, Post-Attack.
(USAF Photo)

In the days that followed, as the base slowly returned to a semblance of its operational rhythm, the identities of the fallen defenders became known, their names echoing through the ranks with a mixture of grief and profound reverence. They were not anonymous casualties; they were comrades, their loss felt with a sharp, personal pain. The story of the battle crystallized around the heroic sacrifice at Bunker 051, where a small team had held the line against impossible odds.

The four men who gave their lives defending the bunker were Sergeant Cyr, a husband and father from the quiet potato-farming country of Presque Isle, Maine; Sergeant Fischer, from Woodhaven, New York; Sergeant Hebron, hailing from the bustling city of St. Louis, Missouri; and Sergeant Mills of Long Beach, California. Their story of heroism at the bunker, however, is intrinsically linked with that of a fifth Defender, Sergeant Coggins. Sgt. Coggins had fought alongside them with extraordinary gallantry until he was severely wounded and evacuated during the battle. For their conspicuous bravery, the fallen of Bunker 051 were awarded the Silver Star. Sergeant Coggins however, did not formally receive the medal until a ceremony in 1999.

The sacrifice of Cyr, Fischer, Hebron, and Mills, and the heroism of Coggins, along with that of the seventeen other Security Policemen, and 29 South Vietnamese soldiers who fell in the wider battle for the base that night, became a defining legend of courage and devotion to duty.

From left to right: Sgt Coggins, Sgt Cyr, Sgt Fischer, Sgt Hebron and Sgt Mills. (USAF Photo)

The story of their stand spread rapidly, first through the ranks of the Security Police Squadron and then throughout the base and the Air Force itself. A stark example of courage against impossible odds and the strategic importance of their sacrifice was not lost on the high command. By refusing to break, by absorbing the full, concentrated fury of the initial enemy assault for those critical minutes, the five men in Bunker 051 had single-handedly disrupted the enemy's timetable. They had prevented the Viet Cong from achieving the clean, rapid breach upon which their entire plan depended. Their actions had directly

enabled the mobilization of the Quick Reaction Teams and the redirection of Army units, turning a potential rout into a successful, if desperate, defense. They had, without exaggeration, saved Tan Son Nhut.

The 377th holds a memorial service for those KIA during the Tet Offensive. (USAF Photo)

However, the valor displayed that night was not limited to one bunker. All along the perimeter, the men of the 377 SPS had fought with a tenacity that stunned the attackers and impressed their commanders. They had transitioned in an instant from a police force to a front-line infantry unit, fighting a desperate, close-quarters battle in the dark. For its collective performance, for its “extraordinary gallantry” in the face of an “all-out attack by a large, well-armed enemy force,” the 377 SPS was later awarded a Presidential Unit Citation. It was the highest honor a unit could receive, a formal acknowledgment from the President of the United States that their actions had been pivotal to the nation’s cause.

For the airmen in the group, the citation was a source of immense pride, a validation of their training and courage. But it was forever tinged with the memory of cost. The heroes of Tet were not just the men who survived to wear the citation on their uniforms, but of those whose names were now etched onto memorial plaques and into the permanent history of their service. Their sacrifice had become the defining moment of the 377th’s story, a legacy of valor forged in the fire and darkness of a single night in Vietnam.

Part 6:

A War of Attrition

"HOSTILE, DIED WHILE MISSING, AIR LOSS, CRASH – LAND... BODY RECOVERED. CAUSE: HOSTILE ROCKET ATTACK."

- CASUALTY PROFILE, 15 MAY 1968.

The Tet Offensive was a climactic, head-on collision, a battle of discernible lines and tangible objectives. Its aftermath, however, devolved into something more insidious and, in some ways, more psychologically taxing. Though the main ground assault on Tan Son Nhut had been catastrophically defeated, the enemy was far from spent. They had learned a costly lesson: a direct, conventional assault on the hardened fortress was suicidal. So, they adapted, shifting their strategy from a singular, overwhelming blow to a campaign of attrition waged from a distance. The remainder of 1968 was not a year of peace; but rather a year of almost continual rocket bombardment.

This new phase began in earnest in May, with a renewed enemy push that came to be known as the "May Offensive" or "Mini-Tet." For the men on the base, it was a distinction without a difference. The attacks were characterized by sudden, indiscriminate barrages of heavy 122mm rockets and mortar rounds, fired from concealed positions in the sprawling suburbs and farmlands surrounding the base. There was no frontline, no bunker to shelter in, and often, no warning. The first sign of an attack was the high, tearing shriek of incoming ordnance, a sound that gave a man perhaps two or three seconds to dive for the nearest ditch or hide under the sturdiest piece of furniture he could find.

This was a battle of random chance, a deadly lottery that made no distinction between a general officer in the command post and a mechanic on the flight line. The rockets arrived at all hours, turning the mundane acts of daily life—walking to the mess hall, sleeping in a barracks, working on a jet engine—into a roll of the dice. The psychological toll was immense. It fostered a pervasive sense of helplessness and fatalism, a constant, nagging awareness that life could be extinguished at any second by a force that was unseen and unassailable.

The human cost of this rocket war was relentless and cruel. The casualty reports from this period read like a grim, staccato drumbeat of loss. On a single day, 15 May, a

heavy barrage killed at least four members of the 377th: Airman First Class Paul J. DeWolf, Staff Sergeant Lloyd F. Ferris, and Airmen First Class Arthur C. Jones and John H. Slaughter. They were not killed storming a barricade, but rather struck down in the course of their duties, victims of an enemy they never saw. In late June, Airman First Class William H. Fischer was killed by a rocket. In August, the officer corps was struck when Major Samuel K. Treen, a respected Civil Engineering officer, was killed by a direct hit on his quarters. His death, recorded in unit histories was a stark reminder that even rank and the perceived safety of an administrative role offered no protection.

Tan Son Nhut Air Base, 700 Area., ca. 1970s.
(USAF Photo)

The story of Technical Sergeant George Pittman, a Security Policeman, encapsulated the brutal, life-altering nature of this phase of the war. During one of the 1968 barrages, a rocket exploded near his position, the shrapnel tearing through his body and grievously wounding his leg. He would survive, but at the cost of a limb. His long, painful recovery and his subsequent fight to remain in the Air Force—a fight he would win through sheer force of

will—became a quiet testament to the resilience of the wounded, but also a living symbol of the permanent scars, both visible and invisible, that these attacks inflicted.

In the face of this onslaught, the 377th adapted once again. The mission of the Civil Engineering Squadron became a cycle of destruction and reconstruction. They developed highly efficient “Rapid Runway Repair” teams, their men and equipment on constant standby. When a mortar gouged a crater in the main runway, they would race onto the tarmac, often while the “all clear” was still a distant hope, and work with frantic speed to clear debris, fill the hole, and lay down quick-drying cement patches. Their ability to get the airfield operational again in mere hours was a remarkable feat of engineering and courage, a direct defiance of the enemy’s attempt to paralyze the base.

South Vietnamese workers repair the runway at TSN AB, ca. 1970s. (USAF Photo)

By the time Colonel Benjamin B. Shields assumed command in late July, he was leading a group that was battle-hardened in a new kind of warfare. The dramatic heroism of the Tet defense had been replaced by a grimmer, more attritional struggle for survival. His command was defined not by a single, epic battle, but by the daily, unglamorous, and deeply dangerous work of holding the fortress together under a constant, indiscriminate rain of exploding steel. The aftershocks of Tet would continue to rattle Tan Son Nhut for the rest of a long and bloody year.

Part 7:

Vietnamization and the Fading Roar

"WE WERE TO TURN THE FIGHTING OVER TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY... WE TRAINED THEM, BUT DID THEY HAVE THE SAME CONVICTIONS WE HAD? IT WAS THEIR COUNTRY, BUT WHOSE FUTURE?"

- AIRMAN PENLEY, 377 CSG, 1968

The year 1969 dawned on a Tan Son Nhut that was, for the first time in its history, a place of relative quiet. The furious, climactic battles of 1968 had bled into a tense, watchful calm. The enemy, having failed to break the base with either a massed ground assault or a sustained rocket campaign, had shifted their focus elsewhere. For the men of the 377 CSG, the absence of the daily sirens and the shrieking of incoming ordnance was a welcome but almost unnerving silence. This lull, however, did not signify an end to their mission. Instead, it marked the beginning of its most complex and perhaps most challenging phase. The war was not over, but the American role in it was about to fundamentally change.

The political shockwaves of the Tet Offensive had finally reached their logical conclusion in Washington D.C. The new administration of President Richard Nixon introduced a policy that would define the remainder of the war: "Vietnamization." The strategy was a reversal of the massive American buildup of the preceding years. Its core tenet was to equip, train, and build up the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) to a point where they could stand on their own against the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong. As the RVNAF grew in capability, American forces would be incrementally withdrawn. The new watchword was not "search and destroy," but "advise and assist." The goal was no longer to win the war for the South Vietnamese, but to enable them to win it for themselves, thus creating "peace with honor" and a pathway for an American exit.

For the 377 CSG, now under the command of Colonel Frank E. Marek who took over in the summer of 1969, this policy shift was not an abstract strategic concept; it was a radical redefinition of their daily existence. For three years, their mission had been one of relentless growth—building, expanding, defending, and supporting a massive American war machine. Now, their primary task was to methodically dismantle that same machine, or rather, to carefully transfer its components and its operational knowledge into the hands of

their South Vietnamese counterparts. The 377th became the central agent of Vietnamization for the entire southern region's air infrastructure.

Aerial view of TSN AB, ca. 1970s.
(USAF Photo)

The "Concrete Revolution" of the past was replaced by a "Revolution in Partnership." American NCOs and officers who had once been solely responsible for running the base's critical functions now found themselves in the role of teachers and mentors. A supply sergeant from the 377th, who a year ago was desperately trying to account for ammunition during a rocket attack, was now working side-by-side with a South Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) sergeant, teaching him the intricacies of the USAF's computerized inventory system. A Civil Engineering captain was no longer just directing the repair of a damaged runway; he was advising a VNAF captain on how to organize and manage his own repair teams. This transfer of knowledge was the bedrock of the entire policy.

The process accelerated through 1970. The American withdrawal began in earnest under the operational name "Keystone Eagle." Tan Son Nhut, once the primary port of entry for American troops, now became the primary port of embarkation. The 377th, which had for

years processed arriving personnel, now managed the logistics of their departure. The Group's squadrons oversaw the turn-in of equipment, the closing of facilities, and the formal handover of entire sections of the base. An American-run barracks would be emptied, inventoried, and then, in a small, formal ceremony, its keys would be handed to a VNAF commander. The American flag would come down, and the yellow-and-red-striped flag of South Vietnam would go up. The U.S. footprint on the base, once a sprawling, dominant presence, was visibly shrinking.

This calm was briefly shattered in the spring of 1970 when American and South Vietnamese forces launched a large-scale incursion into Cambodia to clear out enemy sanctuaries. The operational tempo at Tan Son Nhut surged once more, with the base becoming a critical staging hub for the offensive. The 377th was thrust back into a high-intensity support role, managing a massive flow of men and materiel. The enemy responded with a new series of rocket attacks on the base, a violent reminder of the war's continued presence. But this was a final, fleeting echo of the past. As the Cambodian operation wound down and a new commander, Colonel Harold E. Hobbs, took the reins of the 377th, the mission returned to the inexorable, methodical rhythm of drawdown and transfer. The roar of the American war was fading and steadily being replaced by the uncertain hum of a new, Vietnamese-led future.

Part 8:

The Final Mission

"WITH THE START OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE 'EASTER OFFENSIVE' IN LATE MARCH 1972, THE SQUADRON WAS PLACED ON ITS HIGHEST STATE OF ALERT SINCE THE 1968 TET OFFENSIVE."

- HISTORY OF THE 377 SPS, COVERING THE PERIOD JAN-MAR 1972

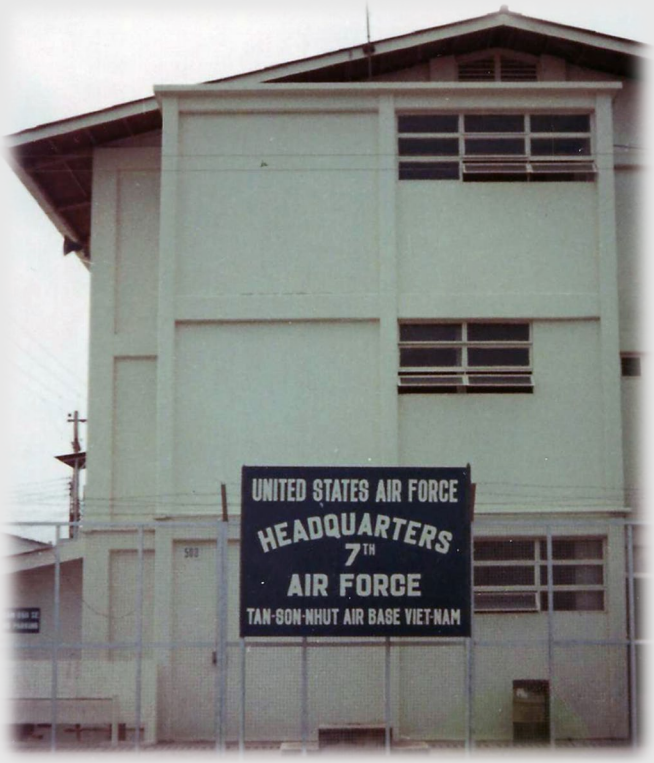
As the early 1970s progressed, the policy of Vietnamization continued to reshape the American military posture in South Vietnam. The vast ground-level presence was shrinking rapidly, with U.S. infantry battalions departing the field and turning over their firebases to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). This strategic withdrawal, however, did not mean an abdication of American military power. The cornerstone of the "peace with honor" strategy was the continued guarantee of American airpower, a technological trump card that could be played to backstop the ARVN against a major enemy offensive. The nature of the 377th's mission was about to undergo its most significant transformation, evolving from a support role into a direct combat function.

On 17 January 1972, this new reality was formalized. The 377 CSG was officially redesignated as the 377th Air Base Wing (ABW). The change was far more than semantic. It signified a fundamental shift in responsibility. For nearly six years, the Group had existed to support the flying missions of others. Now, the wing would have combat squadrons of its own. As other tactical air wings across the country were inactivated and their assets redeployed, a collection of specialized flying units, which had been tenants on the base, were consolidated under the 377th's command.

The new wing, now led by Colonel Charles D. Gunn Jr., became a multi-faceted combat organization. The A-37 Dragonfly, a nimble jet attack aircraft, was flown by the 8th Special Operations Squadron on strike missions. The venerable C-47 "Gooney Bird," in its C/EC-47 variant, was now a sophisticated electronic warfare platform for the 360th Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron, tasked with hunting for enemy radio signals. O-2 Skymasters of the 21st Tactical Air Support Squadron flew dangerous Forward Air Control (FAC) missions, while the 9th Special Operations Squadron conducted psychological warfare

operations. The 377th was no longer just the landlord and defender of a fortress; it was now one of its principal swords.

The timing of this transformation proved to be extraordinarily prescient. Just over two months later, on 30 March 1972, the NVA launched the Easter Offensive. This was not a guerrilla insurgency like Tet; it was a massive, conventional invasion, a blitzkrieg of tanks, artillery, and thousands of infantrymen pouring across the Demilitarized Zone and striking from sanctuaries in Cambodia. The offensive was a supreme test of the Vietnamization policy. The ARVN, though better equipped than ever, staggered under the sheer weight of the onslaught. Entire divisions were shattered. The survival of South Vietnam hung in the balance, and the decisive factor was to be American airpower.



Seventh Air Force HQ at TSN AB, ca. 1970s.
(USAF Photo)

Tan Son Nhut, and the newly cast 377 ABW, was once again thrust into the heart of major operations. The long period of quiet was violently shattered. The base came under renewed and intense rocket attack, and the Security Police and Civil Engineering squadrons were once again engaged in their familiar battle of defense and repair. But now, they were also defending their own wing's combat assets.

The pilots and aircrews of the 377th flew into the teeth of the invasion. The A-37 pilots flew sortie after sortie, striking at North Vietnamese tanks and troop concentrations. The FACs in their O-2s flew low and slow over the battlefield, marking targets for the waves of fighters and B-52s that were being thrown into the fight. The EC-47s prowled the skies, their electronic sensors providing vital intelligence on enemy command posts and troop movements. The wing was fully engaged in the massive aerial effort that ultimately broke the back of the Easter Offensive. By blunting the invasion with a curtain of steel from the air, the U.S. demonstrated that even with its ground troops gone, its air arm remained a devastatingly powerful force.

Under its final commander, Colonel David A. Odell, who took over in the summer of 1972, the 377th continued its combat operations through the remainder of the year. The wing had proven its flexibility, evolving from a support unit into a combat force and playing a direct, critical role in turning the tide of the North's most ambitious offensive. It was to be the last great battle of the American war in Vietnam. The successful, if brutal, defense had forced all sides back to the negotiating table in Paris, where the final act of the long drama of Vietnam was about to unfold. The 377th's final mission, it turned out, was not to be one of support or combat, but of conclusion.

Part 9:

Lowering the Flag

"THE MISSION WAS OVER."

- AIRMAN MERRIS, "TAN SON NHUT'S LAST DAY," 1973

The Paris Peace Accords, signed on 27 January 1973, were the culmination of years of tortuous negotiations, a complex and imperfect document designed to extricate the United States from had been its longest war. For the American public, it promised an end to the conflict and the return of prisoners of war. For the men still serving in Vietnam, it was a set of orders. The Accords mandated a complete ceasefire and, most definitively, the withdrawal of all remaining American military personnel within sixty days. For the 377th Air Base Wing, the clock had started ticking on its own existence.

The months of February and March 1973 were a strange, almost surreal period at Tan Son Nhut. The war, which for seven years had been a relentless, deafening presence, simply stopped. The mortar attacks ceased. The frantic operational tempo of the flight line subsided into a quiet, orderly procession. The mission of the 377th, which had shape-shifted from support to combat, now transformed one last time into one of final dissolution. The wing's remaining combat aircraft, its A-37s and C-47s, were formally transferred to the VNAF, their American markings painted over. The primary duty of the wing's personnel was to close out wartime operations, a meticulous and melancholy process of packing, inventorying, and saying goodbye.

One airman, named Merris, who served through those final days, captured the profound sense of this ending in a personal narrative. He described a base that was becoming a ghost town. Barracks that had once housed hundreds of men, their halls echoing with noise and life, now stood silent and empty. Offices were stripped bare; the walls covered in the faint outlines of pictures and maps that had long since been taken down. He wrote of walking through a maintenance hangar that, just a year prior, would have been a hive of activity, now cavernous and still. The silence, he recalled, was the most powerful presence on the base.

The final day came on 28 March 1973. This was the deadline mandated by the Accords, the day the last American combat troops were to depart South Vietnamese soil. For

the 377th Air Base Wing, it was the day of its official inactivation. There was a final, somber ceremony held at the wing's headquarters. It was not a grand parade, but a small, spare gathering of the few remaining American personnel and their VNAF counterparts, the men to whom they were now entrusting the air fortress they had built and defended for so long.

The ceremony was brief. Speeches were made, honoring partnership and shared sacrifices. Medals were exchanged. Then, the final, symbolic act took place. The honor guard slowly, and deliberately, lowered the American flag, the familiar stars and stripes that had flown over the headquarters through years turmoil and battle. As it came down, the VNAF honor guard raised the yellow flag with its three red stripes over the building. The transfer of command was complete.

Base Headquarters, TSN AB, ca. 1970s.
(USAF Photo)

Merris described the moment of finality with a poignant simplicity. After the ceremony, he shook hands with his VNAF counterpart, a man with whom he had worked closely for months. There was little to say. They wished each other luck, a simple phrase freighted with a world of uncertainty. Then, the Americans turned and walked away. They boarded a waiting transport, the engines spooled up, and the aircraft lifted off from the

runway they had so long protected. As the plane banked over the city, they could look down one last time on the sprawling, familiar geography of Tan Son Nhut Air Base. Below them was a legacy of concrete and courage, of a thousand battles fought and a war now left to others to finish. The mission of the 377th was over.

For the men on that plane, and the thousands who had passed through the base over the years, the departure was a moment of profound ambiguity. It was a moment of relief, the end of a long and dangerous tour. But it was also a moment of deep uncertainty, a quiet leaving from a place where so much had been invested, and so much had been lost. The flag had been lowered, the mission was complete, and they were finally going home.

Epilogue:

The Legacy of the 377 CSG

The history of the 377th Air Base Wing in Vietnam does not end with the departure of the last aircraft from Tan Son Nhut in March 1973. Its legacy endured, written in the record of its accomplishments, etched in the memories of those who served, and measured by the impact it had on the course of the war. For seven years, from the frantic buildup of 1966 to its final, somber withdrawal, the 377th was more than just a unit; it was a fulcrum upon which American airpower in South Vietnam pivoted.

Its first and most fundamental legacy was that of a strategic enabler. In the sprawling, complex ecosystem of the war, the 377th had been a foundational element. Every strategic plan formulated by the generals at Seventh Air Force headquarters, every bomb-laden fighter that roared off the runway, every life-saving medical evacuation flight, and every vital pouch of mail delivered to a remote outpost was inextricably linked to the work of the Airmen of the 377th. They were the ones who managed the “busiest airport in the world,” who poured the concrete, who fueled the aircraft, who loaded the cargo, and who provided the essential security that made all other operations possible. They were the masters of the unglamorous but indispensable arts of logistics and support, and without them, the air war as it was could not have succeeded.

Its second, and most dramatic legacy was forged in the crucible of combat. The 377th proved that in the asymmetric warfare of Vietnam, there was no “rear area.” A support wing could, in an instant, become a front-line combat unit. This truth was written in blood on the night of the Tet Offensive. The heroic stand of the Security Police, particularly the sacrifice of the men in Bunker 051, became a defining moment not just for the wing, but for the United States Air Force. It was a brutal, textbook confirmation of the evolving doctrine of air base defense, and a testament to the fact that an airman’s duty could demand the courage of a combat infantryman. The Presidential Unit Citation awarded for that defense was not merely a decoration; it was an official acknowledgment of a legacy of valor, a story that would be passed down to future generations of Airmen.

Finally, its legacy was one of transformation. The 377th's story arc perfectly mirrors the strategic shifts of the American war effort. It began as an agent of massive buildup, transitioned to a posture of dogged defense, evolved into a partner for the policy of Vietnamization, and transformed one last time into a combat wing that played a critical role in the final major battle. The unit's ability to adapt to these radically different missions—from construction to combat and mentorship to withdrawal—was a testament to the flexibility and professionalism of its personnel.

The 377th was later reactivated as the 377th Combat Support Wing at Ramstein Air Base in West Germany in 1985 and then inactivated again in 1991. Several years later in 1993 it was again reactivated as the host unit of Kirtland AFB, where it remains to this day, and though a world away from the tropical heat and chaos of the Vietnam War its lineage remains tied to those seven years at Tan Son Nhut. Its emblem, which bares the image of the tiger, invokes the ferocity and warrior ethos that it forged in the jungles of Vietnam. A permanent reminder of a time when the wing stood at the center of a long and difficult war, a legacy of service, sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to its mission, no matter how challenging or how perilous. The fortress they built and defended is now a distant memory, but the legacy of those who served there endures in the Airmen that carry on its name.

Campaign Streamers: Vietnam; Vietnam Air Offensive; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV; TET 69/Counteroffensive; Vietnam Summer-Fall, 1969; Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1970; Sanctuary Counteroffensive; Southwest Monsoon; Commando Hunt V; Commando Hunt VI; Commando Hunt VII; Vietnam Ceasefire.

Decorations: Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device; 8 Apr 1966– 31 May 1967; 31 Jan–31 Mar 1968; 1 Apr 1969–31 Mar 1971; 17 Jan 1972– 28 Mar 1973; Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards; 14 Jun 1985–13 Jun 1987; 1 May 1989–30 Apr 1991; Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm; Apr 1966–28 Jan 1973. **Note**: The Presidential Unit Citation was warded directly to the 377 SPS not the whole 377 CSG.

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