

TRIP REPORT - SAIGON, 29 APRIL 1975, (N8535F)

IN COMPLIANCE WITH VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED FROM YOUR OFFICE, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING FLIGHT ACTIVITY OF (N8535F) ON 29 APRIL 1975 AT SAIGON IS SUBMITTED.

UPON ARRIVAL AT THE AIR AMERICA RAMP VIA HELICOPTER FROM (259 TROUNG QUOC DUNG) IT WAS APPARENT THAT THERE WAS NO SECURITY FOR AAM AIRCRAFT SO ALL FLYABLE HELICOPTERS WERE DISPATCHED TO ROOFTOP PADS BY THE OPERATIONS MANAGER.

(CAPT. EISLER) AND I MANNED (N8535F) AT ABOUT 0930 HOURS AND AFTER ORBITING FOR AWHILE WE LEARNED THAT THERE WERE TWO FLYABLE (UH1H) HELICOPTERS ON THE (ICCS RAMP) SO WE TRIED TO LAND THERE TO FLY ONE OF THEM BUT WERE FIRED UPON BY SOUTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY PERSONNEL ON THE RAMP. WE THEN LANDED ON (ROOFTOP PAD NO 30) (192 CONG LY STREET) AT ABOUT (1300) HOURS AND WERE ADVISED BY THE OM TO SHUT DOWN THERE AND STANDBY. ABOUT EVERY FIFTEEN MINUTES OR SO WE TRIED WITHOUT SUCCESS TO CONTACT THE OM FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

WHEN WE LANDED ON (PAD 30) SEVERAL AMERICANS CAME UP AND ONE OF THEM HAD A (DAO) CUSTOMER RADIO SO ABOUT 1115 HOURS WE LEARNED THAT THE EVACUATION OF (SAIGON) HAD BEGUN. WE TOOK OFF FROM (PAD 30) WITH 10 PASSENGERS ABOARD AND ATTEMPTED TO ESTABLISH RADIO CONTACT WITH (VICTOR OPERATIONS) THE PILOT OF (46 N67984) ANSWERED AND INFORMED US THAT (V0) HAD BEEN EVACUATED AND THAT THERE WAS FUEL AVAILABLE ONLY ON THE U.S. NAVY SHIPS OFF THE COAST. AT THIS POINT WE HAD ABOUT 700 POUNDS OF FUEL REMAINING SO DECIDED TO PROCEED TO ONE OF THE SHIPS, DROP OFF OUR PASSENGERS, REFUEL AND RETURN TO SAIGON TO ASSIST IN THE EVACUATION

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OF PERSONNEL FROM THE ROOFTOP PADS TO [DAO.]

WE CONTACTED THE [U.S.S. BLUE RIDGE] ADVISED THEM OF OUR INTENTIONS AND THEIR CONTROLLER VECTORED US TO THE SHIP. UPON ARRIVAL WE HAD TO ORBIT FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES WAITING FOR LANDING CLEARANCE. ON AT LEAST FOUR OCCASIONS WE ADVISED THE [BLUE RIDGE] THAT WE WOULD REQUIRE REFUELING AND THE CONTROLLER ACKNOWLEDGED EACH TIME SO WE WERE CERTAIN WE WOULD BE GETTING FUEL UPON LANDING.

HOWEVER, IMMEDIATELY UPON LANDING THE [EXECUTIVE OFFICER] OF [THE BLUE RIDGE] RUSHED UP AND SHOUTED WORDS TO THE EFFECT THAT WE COULD NOT HAVE ANY FUEL AND THAT WE SHOULD FLY THE AIRCRAFT OVER THE SIDE AND DITCH IT IN THE OCEAN. AT THE SAME TIME, NAVY PERSONNEL WERE REMOVING THE COCKPIT DOORS AND THROWING THEM OVER THE SIDE. I TOLD THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER THAT WE MUST RETURN TO SAIGON BUT HE SAID WE WERE NO LONGER NEEDED AND THAT THE MILITARY WERE ON THE WAY TO SAIGON TO COMPLETE THE EVACUATION.

AT THIS POINT I SIGNALLED TO CAPT. EISLER AND HE SHUT DOWN THE ENGINE AND WE DISMOUNTED. I TOLD THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER THAT IF HE WANTED OUR AIRCRAFT OFF HIS SHIP, HE COULD PUSH IT OVER THE SIDE, THAT NEITHER CAPT. EISLER NOR I WERE GOING TO DITCH IT. HE THEN MOTIONED TO TWO SAILORS AND I WAS FIRMLY ESCORTED OFF THE FLIGHT DECK, I AND MY LUGGAGE WERE SEARCHED, MY PERSONAL WEAPON THROWN OVERBOARD AND I WAS TAKEN BELOW DECK FOR EVACUEE PROCESSING. I WAS NOT ALLOWED ON DECK AGAIN UNTIL THE FOLLOWING MORNING WHEN I DISCOVERED [N8535] SITTING THERE FORWARD OF THE FLIGHT DECK WITH NO COCKPIT DOORS.

IN EFFECT OUR AIRCRAFT WAS IMPOUNDED BY THE U.S. NAVY ON
THE U.S.S. BLUE RIDGE AT ABOUT 1200 HOURS, 29 APRIL 1975,
PREVENTING US FROM COMPLETING OUR ASSIGNED MISSION.

[CAPT. D. R. BUXTON
CAPT. D. C. EISLER]
AIR AMERICA, INC.

THE AFTERNOON OF APRIL 28 I TOOK THE [DANANG] RADIO OPERATOR AND HER YOUNGER SISTER TO THEIR HOUSE ON [TRU MINH KY] AFTERWARD, I WAS RETURNING TO MY HOUSE ON [CHI LANG] TO CARRY LUGGAGE - ETC. OUT TO THE AIRFIELD. AT THAT TIME 1700 HOURS THE [A-37S] BOMBED [TSN] I IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO [TSN] AIRFIELD AND ABANDONED MY LUGGAGE AT [CHI LANG] THERE WAS NOT TIME TO RETURN AND RECOVER ANYTHING. THE NEXT MORNING MYSELF AND [CARPENTER] MADE THE FIRST FLIGHT INTO [259] AND FLEW 8 PILOTS OR SO OUT TO THE RAMP. WE THEN MADE A TRIP TO [DAO] AND PICKED UP 7 AND FLEW TO THE [BLUE RIDGE] AT THAT TIME [CARPENTER] AND [ANGLES (FM)] CHOSE TO REMAIN ON THE SHIP. I FLEW THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY SOLO - SHUTTling FROM THE EMBASSY ROOFTOP TO SHIP WITH INTERMESHED TRIPS TO [DAO, LZ, 23, 259] AND INTERSHIP TRANSPORT, LANDING ABOUT 1850 ON THE HANCOCK] MY DEPARTURE FROM [SAIGON] WAS ABOUT 0900 WITH ABOUT [5] TRIPS TO VARIOUS SHIPS] I DON'T KNOW THE STATUS OF THE [DANANG OPERATOR (RADIO)] OR HER SISTER.

[CAPTAIN COALSON (19491)]
AIR AMERICA, INC.

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