

Last fights.

5 days in hell, or the end of GM 100 in Indochina.

June 24-28, 1954.

By

Jean-François Mouragues

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TO MY MEN WHO ARE DEAD.

My companions it's me my good people of war,
It's your boss yesterday who comes here to speak,
From what we do not know, or that we hardly know;
My dead I greet you and I say to you: Thank you.
Anonymous heroes, nonchalant with hope.
You wanted, was not it, at the time of the return,
When he set foot on the land of France,
Having a bit of glory, he had a little love.
As to whether everything went this way,
And if you did not stay for nothing there,
If you did not die for a dead thing,
O poor friends, do not ask it!
Sleep in the greatness of your sacrifice,
Sleep, let no regret come to haunt you!
Sleep in this broad and liberating peace
Where my thought in mourning will go to visit you!
I know where to find, at their ultimate stage
All those whose great grass has drunk vermeil blood,
And those engulfed by the traps of undermining,
And those who devoured the fever and the sun.
From here, I'll see you down to earth
In the early pit where I left you,
Rigids clad in your war clothes
And weird shrouds made of braided reeds.
If sometimes in the jungle where the tiger touches you
And that no more shakes the recoil of the barrel,
It seems to you that a finger is touching your shoulder,
If you think you hear your name called:
Soldiers resting under the distant earth,
And whose blood gave me remorse,
Just say, "This is our Captain
"Who remembers you ... and who counts his dead. "
Vicomte Emmanuel Raymond of Borelli.

Captain of the Foreign Legion.
Tuyen-Quang 1885.

For many French, the war of Indochina stopped on May 8, 1954, day of the fall from Dien-Bien-Phu. Yet more than a month and a half after the surrender of the camp garrison entrenched, disappeared on the colonial road 19 one of the most beautiful unit that the Army

French possessed in Indochina: the GM100. This mobile group set up on the model United States units of World War II consisted of the Korean Regiment (1st and 2nd battalions created by splitting the former French battalion of the UN repatriated from Korea in

December 1953), the 43rd RIC (BM / 43RIC), 2nd Group of the 10th RAC supported by 3 Squadron of the 5th Cuirassiers. A communications company, the 2nd CMT, a transport group and an engineering unit, are also assigned to device 1 . With a potential in equipment and men impressive: more than 3500 men, he On June 24, 1954, he lost one third of his strength (killed, wounded, disappeared, prisoners).

From December 1953 to June 1954 the GM100 will be responsible for: "Highlands" in the Kontum, Pleiku, Ankhé areas and thereafter, support for Operation "Atlante" aimed at reclaiming the coastal areas of Annam Center. " *The General Navarre, appointed in May 1953 Commander-in-Chief in Indochina was given mission*

to put France in a favorable position to enter into peace negotiations with the Minh. For this purpose the Navarre Plan aimed for 1953-1954:

On the one hand, to rid the center and South Annam of the Viet-Minh threat and entrust the

defense of Annam to the Vietnamese forces,

On the other hand, to recover mobile military forces for North Annam already controlled by

*the Viet-Minh, and Tonkin (**Atlante** operation - main effort),*

*Finally, to fix at Dien-Bien-Phu, west of Tonkin, the Viet-Minh threat towards the Laos and protect Upper Laos (Operation **Castor** - secondary effort.) " 2*

The infantry units that made up the mobile group were all mixed. During the disembarkation in Saigon of the French battalion of the UN which had brilliantly illustrated

for two years in Korea, the General Staff recovering a seasoned regiment had split this battalion by "yellowing" it, a term used at the time with soldiers recruited to the essentials in Cambodia. The battalion became a regiment. Indigenous elements attached to the

regiment, were of great value, many had a great deal of experience in profession of arms, especially in 2 / Korea which was given the former "commando Bergerol"

(name of its founder) very feared by the Vietminh. The BM / 43rd RIC was not left out,

it was a business unit that already had a good track record and almost seven years experience. These six months of existence will be enamelled by the glorious fighting of Dak-Doa,

Plei-Rinh, PK14, PK 15 and Plei-Bon just to name a few.

Despite seven years of war, the French troops occupied in Center Annam only the province of Hue and the province of Nha-Trang. The provinces of Qui-Nhon and Quang-Ngai

were still controlled by the Vietminh. The "Atlantis" operation was aimed at reunification of the Annam Center by crushing the rebel units that had settled there. The

French forces maneuvered on an operating theater nearly 400 kilometers long from Tourane to Cape Varella, and 100 kilometers deep from Pleiku to Qui-Nhon. Four

1 The 2nd CMT is composed of up to 3 sections of staff from the Legion of

Paras, Goums or rallies Viets. *"A true Intelligence Commando the 2nd CMT included*

1

Lieutenant, 1 Chief Warrant Officer, 3 Sergeants Chiefs, Section Chiefs and a Radio Sergeant. Testimony of the Sergeant

Gabaye sergeant at the 2nd CMT

2 General Albert Billard, lieutenant at 2 / 10th RAC in: Ankhé (Annam Center) June 24, 1954: difficult extraction or announced ambush. Review of the Marine Troops "Ancre d'Or Bazeilles" No.

340. Communication to

the author of March 27, 2006.

mobile groups (Vietnamese GM 11, GM41 and 42 mountain dwellers made up of indigenous

Rhés tribes, Bahnars and Jarais from the Far East Marche Battalions, and GM

100) are requested to participate in the operation that will be combined with a landing amphibious troops. The cities of Qui-Nhon and Quang-Ngai are released on March 13 without

that the opponent does not actually engage the fight, and without the three main regiments

enemies (108, 96, 803) and other provincial units in the area were destroyed.

Called to reinforce Pleiku under the direct threat of the 803 Regiment which was not where

expected (the 108 meanwhile, threatening the city of Ban-Me-Thuot further south), the GM 100 defends the town of Komtum for a time before the order is given to him to abandon it. Yes the French progress on the coast, the Communists accentuate their military pressure and north of Pleiku: *"to the north and north-east of the city, mountaineers had either taken the jungle, be under the influence of communist propaganda, massacred the French NCOs who framed them, and this time the enemy did not refuse the fight."* 3 Blocked in Pleiku, GM 100 can not support the operation "Atlantis" trampled all the way as the road Pleiku Ankhé Qui-Nhon has just been cut, and that the news coming from the entrenched camp of Dien-Bien-Phu creates initially for Defend Laos from any Vietminh invasion and fix the maximum of divisions in Tonkin Enemies: Divisions 304, 308, 312, 320 and 351, not counting the provincial forces and regional, are hardly reassuring.

On 8 and 9 April, the GM100 relieves the GM11 unit of the South Vietnam Army very proven and demoralized by the fighting on March 30, when one of his battalions was wiped out at the Déo Pass Mang. The loss of this pass prohibits the junction between Ankhé and Qui-Nhon bridgehead of the Atlante operation. To ensure the support of GM11, the tanks of the 3/5 e Cuirassiers are brought back to Pleiku. In addition, the GM11 will be reinforced from GM21 to Mang Yang Pass. The 12 April these two units are ambushed near the pass of the same pass, and April 16 following another ambush, RC 19 towards Pleiku is considered as permanently cut off from supply convoys. The entrenched camp of Ankhé is located like that of Dien-Bien-Phu at the bottom of a basin served by a small aerodrome. This basin is surrounded by nearby hills arranged in points of support and dominated on its Eastern part by the Annamitic cordillera. The camp has a footprint of almost 6 kilometers of long on 1 wide. 2 / Korea, the PC, the artillery and the 4th battery of the 10th RAC are implanted in the village of Ankhé, altitude 462 meters, dominated 300 meters higher, by the point South East. North, in hedgehog, the position held by the 520th TDKQ (light battalion Vietnamese commandos) and a platoon of the 4th Vietnam Reconnaissance Squadron

(4th ERVN). These two units line the airstrip. In the North East, took the position BM / 43rd RIC and the 6th battery of the 10th RAC. This position is dominated by the fulcrum of the Pagoda and that of Nui Nhon which culminates at 685 meters. Between these two PA the RC 19 which in the direction of Qui Nhon. The neck of Deo Mang occupied by the Vietminh since 30 March is only 10 kilometers from the first French positions. More to the East, La Cordillères Annamitique dominates the entrenched camp of its 2000 meters of altitude. Finally eccentric to the West, the position of 1 / Korea is located 3 kilometers from the position of 2 / Korea in the hamlet of An Cu. This hamlet is dominated by the Hong Kong PA (altitude 707 meters). From the 10th to the 21st of April, the GM100 continues the work of adjustment of positions and point of support to support a long siege. All units, in turn, participate in the repair of the airstrip to allow Dakotas and other large-size aircraft Bristol double door to land, lifting the minefields, because the GM 11 has left no indication as to their locations, the setting of batteries and the repair of

3 Bernard Fall. Indochina 1946 1962 Chronicle of a revolutionary war. Ed Robert Laffont Paris 1962 p190 and 191

individual sites and other shelters because no hard structure exists. It's in individual or tented holes that GM100 men will "get healthy again" after the trying struggles of previous months.

On April 28 at 1 pm the first men of Reinforcement Detachment 19 (DR19) were routed by Dakota on the entrenched camp of Ankhé. This detachment includes: 3 officers, 35 non-commissioned officers, the OD and accountants. *"After a few days at Ben-Cat*

back base of the Korean regiment we embark towards the high plateaus some of us come directly from France in reinforcement of others come back from wounds. In

Approaching the track, the camera comes out of clouds, and we see the pitons that surround it.

Directed on the 1st battalion of Korea of Commander Guinard, I am assigned to the company

Captain Delabrosse commanding the 3rd company. I'm replacing number for number, the

assistant NCO who was killed a few days ago. Warrant Officer Thuret welcomes me

warmly. Only European in a company of Cambodians, he will be able to blow a bit (well, if we can say). The hardest thing is yet to come. " 4 .

"On April 28th, young sergeant, I was with Sergeant Raymond Mouragues, from detachment of officers and non-commissioned officers of DR19 who joined Indochina by air

from St Germain en Laye via Toulouse. Arrived in Saigon on April 29th, these personnel

joined Nha-Trang by sea, then Ankhé by air early May. Discovery of the GM100 on the "Highland Highlands" and more particularly the installation of the

1 / Korea at An-Cu, where I was assigned to the 4th company in entrenched position, made us

to think in addition to the situation of Dien-Bien-Phu, whose tragedy we followed. It's here

that we learned the fall of the last points of support a few days after our arrival. The GM100 had been in this sector since early April, practically isolated and encircled by the Viets units, in particular the 803 regiment. " 5

May 8 capitulation of the last defenders of Dien-Bien-Phu, morale is no longer there. Some

1 / Korea Indigenous Soldiers Desert or Intentionally Injury for Repatriation, others like at BM / 43 rIC: this is the case for three soldiers, see their contracts terminated

for "wrong way of serving". Four months of uninterrupted operations used these Southern military who do not feel at home here. *"After May 8, there was no longer any question of*

continue the Atlante plan, but the French Government as early as 8 May began the last

the political phase of the settlement of the conflict as silence settled in Dien-Bien-Phu, she

was led by Pierre Mendès-France who had taken the direction of the Government. If the

war ended badly, it seemed that this statesman was able to succeed, where the Successive governments had failed, for lack of will, but also of flexibility. same if it is not for me to criticize the Navarre plan; he was generous, logical, and agreement with the entry of the Vietnamese Government into the war. It seems that the "report

forces, "the very condition of all war, have not been well measured. 6 Reinforcements at

destination of 2 / Korea arrive after long journey. Attached to DR 19 these men have

4 Major Raymond Mouragues. Deputy Sergeant of a section of riflemen fighters at the 3rd company of 1 / Korea. Interview with the author. October 2005.

5 Colonel of Gendarmerie Michel Gengembre. Sergeant at the 4th Company of 1 / Korea. Letter of 12.November 2005 to the author.

6 Operation Atlante by General J.Sockeel while Colonel commanding GM 42.
the Association of Croix de Guerre.1992. CHETOM.18H29.

embarked in Marseille on the S / S Felix Roussel to Saigon on April 15th. landed on May 7th, they will be rushed to the entrenched camp the next day. 7

On May 19 the remainder of DR 19 which includes 5 non-commissioned officers, 20 master corporals, 16

Corporals and 49 soldiers arrive by air from Nha-

Trang. This detachment will complement the CWB, 1st and 2nd companies whose numbers had dangerously melted, it is routed in GMC to An-Cu place of the Korean Regiment, advanced position on the road to Pleiku.

After a few days of acclimatization the day of May 25 is devoted from 7 hours to 17 hours at the setting of mortar fire on the perimeter of the positions. A chore of 40 PIM (interned military prisoners) is made available to the GM100 to repair the runway aviation. The 3rd company participates in the maintenance of the track. The area assigned to the regiment

from Korea is not safer. When leaving the previous unit, the latter did not leave minefield surveys. Several accidents will be lamented (that of May 13 is one of the most important, a BM / 43rd RIC patrol composed of elements of the CWB and

the 2nd company unknowingly crosses a minefield with two dead, 10 wounded.) The 28

may the soldier Kieu Van Chay of the 3rd company of 1 / Korea jumps on a friendly mine, he

dies shortly after admission to the surgical unit. A few days later it's a ox jumping on a mine. The bursts of the explosion hurt the soldier Sac Phon.

May 29, the 1 / Korea that aligns its three companies of combat is designated for a reconnaissance mission on PK11. The mission is to link with elements friends coming from PK22. If PK 11 is only one Kilometric Point among many (at 11 kilometers from Ankhé in the direction of Pleiku), PK 22 is however a big point of located on a peak overlooking the RC 19. Its very steep slopes make it almost impregnable. It is one of the locks of this jungle road. His garrison is essentially composed of mountain guards from the Rhade and Banhar tribes recruited from

neighboring villages and supervised by a few gendarmes. The 2nd company is in the lead and

opens the road, the 3rd company searches the surrounding vegetation the 1st is in support of

two previous ones. The mission goes smoothly the junction is made with the elements from 2 / Korea. The whole workforce folds An-Cu.

On June 5th, during a night mission, the 3rd company ambushed RC 19 at 2 kilometers west of the Support Point. It was then that around 10:50 pm ten to twenty Vietminh

coming from the South cross the road and are taken under the fire of the French soldiers. Many

enemy soldiers seem to have been killed during the clash. The 3rd company recovers several weapons including 1 American Thompson submachine gun, 1 Sten gun English, a French Mas 36 rifle, 1 German Mauser, 2 French VB grenades throwers, 3 77 caliber grenades, cartridges and miscellaneous documents. This heterogeneous arsenal is only

the reflection of the equipment available to French units engaged in Indochina. The next day,

when returning to the ambush site, gunshots are exchanged for one enemy element responsible for raising his dead. The 3rd company brings back only three corpses

of VM soldiers killed the old at night the documents the uniforms of the soldiers will be as much

information to identify enemy units.

7

Testimony of Master Corporal René Pinot, former Korean, repatriated at the end of his stay and transferred to the 27th Regiment

infantry of Dijon, he volunteered for the Korean regiment in Indochina. Assigned to CWB2

2 / Korea, 81 mortars section, he serves as commander of the command section (30 men

ordered by Warrant Officer Garcia, a DLO Gun Sergeant, plus the mortar group be two pieces.). Letter

to the author of May 11, 2006.

On the 8th of June the 3rd company is appointed to take over the Hong-Cong post which

dominates An-Cu's fulcrum. *"With a detachment of 15 men, I start the painful ascent of the Hong-Cong PA. We occupy the post for the night, the day we go down into the bowl. In the beginning a complete section occupied the PA, but as a result of a tightening of the device, the peak of Hong-Cong is no longer occupied*

the night. This maneuver will be maintained until departure on Pleiku so that the Viets take a stand on this summit which dominates the whole battalion. "

On June 14 the 2nd and 3rd companies are designated to move PK22. departure is set at 6:00 am, the mission is to transport 80 mountaineers and 6 guards and make contact with the mountain people of the village of Plei Bun Bang. The 2nd and 3rd companies go ahead, the PC follows in third step. At around 12.00 the connection is made with the PK22 elements. The return is fixed at 13:00. An hour later the observation plane of the GAO (Air Observation Group) Piper type makes a forced landing at a kilometer south-east of the rubber plantation (PK6) in elephant grasses. The pilot is collected by the 3rd company of 1 / Korea, the device is destroyed by hunting. All the units return to GMC with the exception of the 3rd company, which returns on foot. The outskirts of French positions are infiltrated by rebel units in search of information. On June 15 around 20h10, 250 meters from the positions of the 3rd company 4 VM are caught by a bell and run away to return around 23.20. Unmasked at 300 or 400 meters by this same unit vanishes in the night. Every night brings a lot of shootings and interceptions. On the 18th of June at around 10:10 pm, the 3rd company that was going to ambush for the night falls on two teams of VMs moving in parallel on the RC19 400 meters from the French device, it follows a violent exchange of shots and grenades. A soldier of the 3rd company is wounded in the exchange of fire. *"I ordered a light patrol when my Cambodians detected an adverse element, but so close from the camp, the Viets are feverish, they discover themselves, we fight back, they unhook. The progression in the mud bordering the arroyo does not give us the advantage of the field, we let them go.* » It seems that the Vietminh is increasing its pressure in the sector because intelligence services report 200 VM near Kon Barr 10 kilometers north of PK 11. *"As the weeks go by, it's a mix of garrison life and warlike activities that we lead. The mission being to keep the camp entrenched. Hidden on the pitons, at the bushy vegetation, the enemy watchers watched our slightest movements. The Ray our reconnaissance patrols were gradually becoming smaller. We proceeded the setting of 60m / m and 81m / m mortar fire in thalwegs between 300 and 800 meters around our position at An-Cu. The only external links were by aerial on the airstrip of Ankhé; sometimes even the refueling was parachute. After the fall of Dien-Bien-Phu, the Vietminh promises a similar fate to GM100. The French command then studied the fold of Ankhé by air in*

abandoning all the material or by the RC19 towards Pleiku by forcing the Viets lines. This

This last formula will be chosen for June 24, 1954. " 10

8 Major Raymond Mouragues. Deputy Sergeant of a section of riflemen fighters at the 3rd company of 1 / Korea. Interview with the author. October 2005.

9 Major Raymond Mouragues. Deputy Sergeant of a section of riflemen fighters at the 3rd company of 1 / Korea. Interview with the author. October 2005.

10

Colonel of Gendarmerie Michel Gengembre. Sergeant at the 4th Company of 1 / Korea. Letter of 12.November 2005 to the author.

On 19 June, following the replacement of General Navarre by General Ely, the decision to evacuate Ankhé taken on June 13 is announced at GM100 by General Salan who goes to with General de Beaufort and Colonel Buffin to coordinate the operation called " **Eglantine** ". Colonel Barrou commanding the GM 100 had meanwhile learned the news on June 15 during an air link to Saigon, where he will propose stop, playing the card of "surprise", up to PK 22 meeting place with the element collection. *"The opposing command had to state later that he had known to order the evacuation of Ankhé as early as 13 June and took the necessary measures. » 11* The GM100 will have to leave the entrenched camp with all of its heavy equipment and vehicles, forcing if necessary the possible enemy plugs. *"Apparently the decision taken is consistent and just seems the command believes that the secret will be disclosed as soon as the start of operations, that is to say on June 20th. Regiment 108 will not have time to join his forces to those of Regiment 96, Regiment 803 being attached to Tuy-Hoa, a single regiment adversary can not prevent GM 100 from passing. But with the announcement of the imminent arrival of regiment 108 it will be decided to advance the departure of 24 hours. All this manifests from a sub assessment of the enemy's ability to investigate and attack by surprise. Three solutions offered to us:*

- the first was to abandon the accumulated stocks in Ankhé by destroying them and taking them out immediately by the road before the Vietminh could put one's device on the road.*

- the second "evacuate by air the stocks and the maximum of heavy equipment and destroy the rest,

to go through the bush, the enemy not knowing where he could intercept us.

- to mount a maneuver of "disappointment" making believe that we left to Qui-Nhon and

leave on Pleiku.

The first maneuver was safe but had a very high risk that the enemy retrieves a very large amount of material that would be very useful thereafter as this was the case during the evacuation of Kontum. The second maneuver would have been the best

(suggested by the commandos operating in the bush). Air potential was enough to leave on the ground only the easy-to-burn trucks, many of which was very close to the reform, we could transfer to other bases the heavy weapons the equipment and light vehicles as well as non-essential personnel in combat, Unites passing through the bush (it had to be done the evening of June 24 in the worst conditions). It was getting away with the best price and recovering a unit able to fight as the command wanted. » 12

On June 22, a VM section fired a mortar of 60 towards the 3rd company of 1 / Korea, but the shells fall short. VMs are attacked by mortars 60 of the 2nd and the 3rd company as well as those of 81 of the battery of An-Cu which make a firing shot. Towards

18.45 an ambush of the 3rd company that was dispatched to the places where the VM in the morning takes part of the adverse elements evaluated to a section.

Throughout these last days the activity of the entrenched camp has been relatively intense. A

important airlift, for lack of road links to Pleiku where Qui Nhon whose road is

Bernard Fall. Indochina 1946 1962 Chronicle of a revolutionary war. Ed Robert Laffont Paris 1962

p211.

12 Operation Atlante by General Girard then Lieutenant at the EM of GM 100. Publication of the Association Croix de Guerre. CHETOM.18H29.

cut off has been implemented: its objective to evacuate the maximum of materials (weapons not

essential items, surplus ammunition, archives, civilian sedentary personnel.) and provide the

mobile group the last reinforcements. If for many in France, Dien Bien Phu marks the end

of the Indochina war, on the ground, it is not so. While in Geneva the negotiations on the line of the ceasefire line, which would take the risk both at the level

military to reiterate the suspense of the entrenched camp of Dien Bien Phu in Highlands of Annam Center. Certainly the geography is not the same and seems to play in favor of French troops, unlike what happened at Dien Bien Phu where the remoteness of the entrenched camp and the season made all supplies random, in Ankhé, the refueling centers are located beyond the Annamite Cordillera is less than 50 kilometers as the crow flies, the lights of the hunting and bombing come from either the Arromanche aircraft carrier anchored off Qui-Nhon or Nha-Trang air bases and of Tourane. However, the essential reason that seems to go in the direction of abandonment then that the camp is provided with trenches of buried cells for 105 guns and vehicles, significant stockpiles of material weapons and an excellent aerodrome, lies both in the lack of men, and the threat hanging over the Pleiku Ban Me Thot axis. The presence of three elite battalions and an armored platoon supported by a meager battalion of the young vietnamese in this town center Annam is no longer justified when access to the sea is cut. What reinforcements to bring them in case of a massive attack, while the battle that just ended in Tonkin saw the best intervention troops disappear? ¹³ The wisest solution is to evacuate Ankhé and retreat to Pleiku, the city that commands access to Saigon by the "High Plateaux". General Salan replaces General Navarre who makes this important decision of consequence deciding to regroup with GM 41 and GM 100 to defend the plateaus between Pleiku and Ban Me Thot. *"Personally I would not know the hecatomb of Ankhé's evacuation. Designated as a precursor and escorting personal baggage, I joined Pleiku in DC3 to prepare for the future cantonment and welcome my company."* ¹⁴

Captain André Salvat, Companion of Liberation commanding the CCS 100 of GM, gives us his vision of the facts *"we were installed defensively and ready to receive the famous division 308 descended from Tonkin to "afford" the GM00 in Center Annam, the Troop composed of Korean elders was solid, had the craft, able to hold a seat to Ankhé seems to me. Unfortunately Hanoi Command gave us the order as part of a consolidation of forces to regain Pleiku, which for us and Colonel Barrou commanding the GM was a mistake that the latter will pay very expensive.* The commandos operating in the bush reported to the General Staff enemy heavy units between Ankhé and Pleiku which would make any escape car convoy. The hypothesis envisaged by these guerrilla specialists consists in passing

through the bush and give up all the heavy equipment (cannon vehicles), but this solution

13 At that time only one Airborne Group remained in Indochina, the GAP 1: (7th BPC, 3rd BPVN, 2nd BEP) still intact that General Salan will ask to spare, because after he has nothing left.

14 Colonel of Gendarmerie Michel Gengembre. Sergeant at the 4th Company of 1 / Korea. Letter of 12.November 2005 to the author. On the other hand, Sergeant Michel Gengembre will take part in the operation less than a month later.

" **Myosotis** " on RC 14 between Pleiku and Ban-Me-Thuot where on July 17, the 1st and 4th companies of 1 / Korea

will be wiped out as well as the Guinard Battalion Commander's Command Company in a

ambush at Chu-Dreh pass by five to six enemy battalions. Arrested after 5 hours of combat

until hand to hand, I managed to escape with an officer of my company five days later, during the

forced march to the Quang-Nhai camps. I will join Pleiku alone 8 days after my escape

Exhausted lieutenant having been taken back. Meanwhile, the ceasefire was signed without our knowledge. "

15 Grade of the time.

16 Testimony of Colonel André Salvat. Commander CCS.100. Letter to the author of 29.05.2005.

wise, it will not be ratified, because in these times of crisis the armament can not to be abandoned. Which superior officer would have taken responsibility for destroyed nearly 300

vehicles tons of weapons, and a dozen guns, while France is struggling to to obtain this material from the United States? It is therefore decided that it is by road that the

GM100 will have to make its way to PK22 where the Airborne Group 1¹⁷ (7th BPC¹⁸, 3^e BPVN¹⁹) will wait with GM 42 Colonel Sockeel compound battalion mountaineers

and armored 3^e Squadron 5th Cuirassiers.

The history lessons of the evacuation of the China Border do not seem to have been drawn

or analyzed, or so have been forgotten. During the evacuation of the citadel of Cao-Bang in

1950 CEFEO had lost more than 7000 men in the disaster of the RC4. The troops folded down by their vehicles and miscellaneous equipment, had been cut into pieces during

successive ambushes and collections of elements (1st BEP and 3^e BCCP) annihilated. The city of Lang Son will be abandoned with all his arsenal without combat delivering North Tonkin to

Communists. 1950-1954 the story stammers but the actors do not know it, everyone is busy, 22 kilometers traveled several times it seems playable. *"However, "Specialists" in intelligence reassured their superiors that the units Vietminh could hardly cover in jungle more than 15 to 20 kilometers per day. This prediction proved wrong, the two regiments who launched to meet the GM100 covered stages of 50 kilometers to join the RC19. "* ²⁰ . If the airlift is a undeniable success, most of the sensitive material and a good part of the civilians (almost 1000 people) is repatriated, the time allowed to evacuate all the material will be too short.

Despite numerous aircraft rotations, there are still large stocks of ammunition of food essence (about 380 tons). Never mind, the air force will bomb deposits after the departure of the last friendly units. The Lang Son affair seems to be repeating itself again for the benefit of the Vietminh.

"After the 19th, no one could ignore our intentions, because it's a real useless airlift and dangerous which was one of the causes of the tragedy, by making a complete move on

Saigon and Nha Trang of almost all the heavy equipment the GM 100 had on its base, whereas it should have been left in place, and destroyed upon departure. We were

even arrived, I think to evacuate a part of the population (among which the families of the

Vietnamese Battalion (TDKQ) of Ankhé; which was not without human value but which on

the tactical plan was the last thing to do. " ²¹

The date of the evacuation of the Ankhé entrenched camp originally scheduled for June 25, is

24 because the reports that divisions from Tonkin have the commandos and DLB (Light Bushmen Detachments) who nominate full forest have detected the movements of a large Vietminh unit towards the RC 19. It is therefore necessary to do as quickly as possible in order to avoid that the opponent can not forbid the passage because if the road is cut off from the convoys, some people still believe in the General Staff that the GM100

can make the difference. *"In the immediate future the enemy has some companies, on notice of a few days (three or four) arrival regiments 96 and 803, with two or three*

17 Romain-Desfosses Colonel

18 Commander Balbin

19 Commander Mollo

20 Bernard Fall. Indochina 1946 1962 Chronicle of a revolutionary war. Ed Robert Laffont Paris 1962 p211

21 Operation Atlante by General J.Sockeel while Colonel commanding GM 42. the Association of Croix de Guerre.1992. CHETOM.18H29.

more days the grouping 801, in total the equivalent of a division for us intercept. " ²² Yet on 19 already Fiévet master and mate Girard (B2 GM 100) had exposed the possibilities of the opponent to General Salan *"Regiment 120 adjoins the RC19, a part of the 96 regiment is located near PK22, the bulk of the 810 regiment is a few tens of kilometers from Ankhé, part of the regiment 108 station in the region of the Deo-Mang pass, finally the 803 regiment bled by the GM100 a few months later early is restored. "* ²³ But no doubt in the high spheres that Viet Minh has in the area of impressive logistics. *"Before the end of his campaign on the high trays the Vietminh manages to put on line 16000 fighters supplied by a "continuation logistics "of 25000 Dan Công (people's workers), in fact coolies carrying ammunition and refueling. The fate of the GM100 was therefore sealed even before the order evacuation has been given. "* ²⁴ The Mobile Group, with more than 3,000 men orders a colonel, divided into more than 250 vehicles, will move divided into 4 oars supported by 3 pieces of artillery per train:
1st ream: BM / 43^E RIC - Engineering - 6th Battery from 10th RAC.
2^e ream: PC - CCS - 520th TDKQ - 4th ERVN (3 automasters, 3 half-tracks) and BCS from 10th RAC.
3^e ream: 2 / Korea - 4th Battery from 10th RAC - Services - Equipment.
4^e ream 1 / Korea - 5th battery 10^e RAC-surgical dish.
"The Colonel summoned the 3rd Bureau and dictated to him a device that could be considered a hedgehog in motion with the three battalions one behind the other, the batteries interspersed artillery. GM's PC was behind the lead battalion, covered by the TDKQ of Ankhé, a light battalion (where large errors of command and probity had been committed), so unsafe. As armored some open turret automotilliers. There had no element of recognition to speak of. It seems that the commander of the

GM in a hurry to reach the collection element hoped to pass before all the device enemy is gathered (The grouping 801 was not there yet seems to it), while the artillery could not deploy except in a few places. " 25

The departure is fixed at:

3:00 for BM / 43 e RIC and 520 e TDKQ.

5:00 am withdrawal of units from Hong-Cong post.

7:00 am start of the passage of the auto column.

22 Note of General Girard then lieutenant at the GM100 EM sent to the author on 06.11.2000.

23 General Albert Billard, lieutenant at the 2/10 e RAC in: Ankhé (Annam Center) June 24, 1954: difficult extraction

or announced ambush. Review of the Marine Troops "Ancre d'Or Bazeilles" No. 340. Communication to the author of March 27, 2006.

24 Bernard Fall. Indochina 1946 1962 Chronicle of a revolutionary war. Ed Robert Laffont Paris 1962 p211.

25 Note from General Girard then Lieutenant at the EM of GM100 sent to the author on 06.11.2000.

8:00 am the car convoy passed, the 2 / Korea makes movement.

8:30 1 / Korea leaves An Cu followed by 300 civilians who could not be evacuated.

"June 24th, CWB gathering. Order to ship the backpacks and materials in the GMCs, and setting up the column on either side of the road towards Pleiku. The progression was slow because of the skirmishes strained by the VMs. " 26 *" In most position*

to the west of the camp, the 3 e company will scroll all the GM 100. Our controlled section

Warrant Officer Thuret, a rear guard will not even bother to close doors (barbed wire). It's almost 9:00 am when we start. Non-commissioned officer Deputy, I am at the back of the column, I have only two skirmishers behind me, this position

is always tricky as the progression is very slow and takes time to take its "Cruising speed" due to the congestion of the road by the trucks, and the units Infantry. On the other hand the column of civilians that follows us, approaches the device (it is necessary

avoiding it between the units) do not make things easy for us. " 27 When the last unit of 1 / Korea begins its progression, the first leading vehicles are already more than 8

kilometers. An hour later, the leading elements of 1 / Korea wipe several gusts automatic weapons at PK6 plantation level. Master Corporal Audrain is killed, the Corporal Valentin Injured. Several soldiers are injured by bamboo darts at the exit of the plantation.

1:30 pm The Vitasse commando, reconnaissance unit, signals by radio north of Kon-Bar

the progress of a strong rebel element, simultaneously, a reconnaissance aircraft finds enemy troops 3 kilometers north of the GM00 PC. The message captured by 1 / Korea is not for some reason, relayed to the BM / 43^E RIC yet in head column.

14:20 start of the ambush, the BM / 43th RIC stumbles on a stone dam across the road. A genius craft is disembarked to clear the runway for trucks when the Vietminh assault waves rush towards the WB / 43^E RIC and train the PC. Both leading companies of the 43th ICN can not progress to the PC continue their journey to

PK22. The 3^e company 1 / column tail Korea movement PK14 where she take a stand.

"At around 2:00 pm we were stopped by the ambush and rumors were running that the colonel

Barrou commanding the GM100 was injured. The Bergerol commandos rise to the assault by

successive sections to open a passage to the train of the PC. The sections reviennent decimated. Commander Kleinmann who commanded the battalion asked for support from

T46, and we carry forward with the mortars to force the Viets to bury themselves. A Fifty shells are fired. Shortly after the T46 arrive to drop their bombs at napalm. » 28

"To join Pleiku, the track, and what track, our vehicles are forced, because of on the other hand, the inextricable jungle and elephant grasses that make it impossible to maneuver. We fall into an ambush 3 kilometers deep triggered at following a given signal (was a gasoline seems to me reversed with firing

26

Testimony of Master Corporal René Pinot CCB 2 / Korea. Letter to the author of May 11, 2006.

27

Major Raymond Mouragues. Deputy sergeant in a rifle section outfielders to 3^e company

1 / Korea. Interview with the author. October 2005.

28

Testimony of Master Corporal René Pinot CCB 2 / Korea. Letter to the author of May 11, 2006.

without overflowing or maneuvering possible, our trucks burned by us as by the Viets, and in the confusion many wounded and killed on both sides. Personally, badly hurt by a SKZ (anti-tank shell), after having sheltered in the half-track whose machine gun 12.7 was sending me his hot sockets on the face, I will be picked up by the

Vietminh. I was a prisoner. " 29 Two companies of the 2 / Korea come to the rescue of the

ream the PC but fail some elements of the BM / 43th RIC join the PC.

4:10 p.m. 3^e company moves forward to release the units of the 2 / Korea and the PC. The

TDKQ has volatilized leaving the PC without infantry support. *"We go up the column, many dead, the wounded protect themselves from the rain under the trucks still intact, others burn, it's hell, but we still have a bit of luck we stayed*

in order of battle. " 30 The Nha Trang B26 bombers with multiple machine guns, and the

rain that started to relieve some time pressure on the two oars of tail.

19h00 the 1 and 2 / Korea plus the 2/10^e RAC and the rest of the 520th TDKQ gather in border

RC 19. It is impossible to cross the Viet dam, and there is no new BM / 43th

RIC of the EM. 1 / Korea opens track followed by 2 / Korea in formation column of part of

CCS 100. The leaders of battalions of 1 and 2 / Korea decide after seeing advised Nha Trang of

to reach PK22 by the bush direction full south. The cannons of the last two oars and the

vehicles will be sabotaged by means of incendiary grenades, the untransportable wounded

will be left to the care of Chief Medical Officer Warne-Janville, dependent on them to retain as much as possible the attackers. The 1 / Korea opens the track followed by

2 / Korea in

training double column 3^e and 2^e followed the PC companies then 1st and 4th Companies.

Fighter jets report 50 burned vehicles out of the 250 convoys.

19h30 beginning of the progress in the middle of the bush until 3h30. No tracks are listed

on the maps, which for this region are only established by means of aerial surveys. The

two commanders decide to split the column into small detachments the value of a section. This night will be a real ordeal for all, a nameless nightmare, avoid

to lose, to fall from fatigue and to let go to sleep. Master Corporal Pinot of the CWB

1 / Korea who is part of a group of isolated about sixty men falls on a cantonment of wounded viets. The latter recently arrived in Indochina with the DR19, knows some rudiments of Vietnamese learned during his first stay in Indochina, managed with the help of the company's nurse to be told the direction of KP 22. This detachment composed of isolated from the CWB Bergerols of 2 / Korea and Vietnamese from

TDKQ will be collected by GAP 1 paratroops at 15:00 at PK 22. "In the night the adjutant

Garcia sees through the glow of the burning trucks that we are back to the point departure. We learn that VMs infiltrate the column and direct it as they please. The section falls on a bivouac of wounded Viets, one of them wounded belly clings to me and beg me to treat him. I call a nurse who puts a bandage on the wound, and I ask him the road to take. He tells me to go down into the valley where we arrive in

a dry stream trapped by bamboos spikes planted in the earth, we follow it, and there according to the indications following it we will be in the right direction. We join the column that at 15:00, and at 18:00 we are transported by GMC on PK.22. There reached

acute dysentery I will be judged unfit to resume the departure by the Chief Medical Officer and repatriated on

29 Testimony of Colonel André Salvat letter to the author of 29.05.2005.

30 Major Raymond Mouragues.

Pleiku ³¹ Despite everything many men will be lost forever during these few hours. *"Ankhé's exit is so complicated by the often unplanned fighting that takes place are delivered, far from all forms of conventional warfare that I can not tell. However at times many have been alone. What to do ? Do not to die, guided by the supreme force that is in us and that remains to us now. Live to survive and never give up. These moments will remain dramatic moments that I want to forget as well as the following, the captivity, the marches of death the friends left behind*

on the edge of the track that we will never see again. I was taken in the early morning with 3 others

buddies from the same battalion after my company was hooked. » ³²

The paratroopers will have walked all night to be at the rendezvous with the surviving units of

the ambush. *"The Eastern Grouping (GM 100) left Ankhé, having been entirely disorganized as a result of the massive ambush triggered by the Viet Minh in the current*

In the afternoon, east of PK22, Groupement Ouest (GM 42) must move forward to

occupy the heights of the Yang Mang, while pushing important forces towards the PK22 to connect with the GM100 elements that have successfully reached the friend's post. In the As part of this action, GAP 1 has to move by successive bounds towards PK22 to hold this position, collect the survivors of the GM100 and subsequently ensure the withdrawal of these elements scattered. Progression order 3 e BPVN, GAP, 7 e PCBs " ³³

A Vietnamese document gives us another view of the attack: *"the convoy enemy of over 200 vehicles in single file and in a hurry to join the wing that was coming to her encounter, was abruptly blocked by our fires. The leading vehicle was burning, the second in his effort to clear a path was also reached and got in the way and thus road. The other vehicles driven by the momentum piled up on both sides of the road. After more than an hour of fierce fighting, our forces were completely masters of battlefield. On a front of more than 3 kilometers, lay in disorder; the enemy vehicles, cannons and corpses. Crowds of European prisoners and African heads bowed, passed in successive files before the guns of our rifles soldiers. More than 700 European and African soldiers were killed and wounded, nearly 1,200 more including Colonel Barrou with all his staff taken prisoners, 229 vehicles, 20 cannons and*

more than 1000 rifles fell in our hands. " ³⁴ . . . If this text has the merit of existing, 32 years

after the facts, propaganda always wins over history. Inaccuracies abound. Yes the ambush was a relative success for the Viet-Minh since almost all equipment was left behind, this is mainly due to the slow progress of troops who were not on the trucks, and not as claimed by the author of the text in the "hurry of the French to win PK22", in which case, parties between 3:00 and 8:00

The last elements should have reached the post at the end of the morning. On the other hand the figures of

losses is disproportionately exaggerated because the high hypothesis advanced by Bernard Fall and taken up by

other authors, tends to give one third of the workforce as lost, the low assumption as to

she advanced by the General Albert Billard, lieutenant with the 2/10 e RAC in the Revue des

31 Testimony of Master Corporal René Pinot CCB 2 / Korea. Interview with the author on April 03, 2006. Confirmed by

letter of 11.May 2006. Corporal Chef Pinot will then join his resting unit on Cam Ranh Island at wide of Nha Trang by LCM until the dissolution of the Korean regiment which will become battalion move to Algiers on the ship Aurélia.

32 Testimony of Sergeant Ollivier Veteran Guy from Korea. 1 / Korea. Prisoner at Camp No. 6. Legion of Honor, Military Medal, 1 TOE, Volunteer Resistance Fighter Cross, Korea, Indochina, Algeria. Letter of 9 January 2006.

33 WOD 7 e CHETOM PCBs. Frejus

34 From the book: "Zone 5. 30 Years of War of Liberation. Volume 1. Resistance against colonialism French ". 1986.

Marine Troops "Ancre d'Or Bazeilles" No. 340 is 500 men. Finally, he mention is made of Europeans and African prisoners, but what about Cambodians and Vietnamese who composed most of the battalions?

June 25 3:30, 1st 2^e and 3^e companies come together with the CWB (Trans and EM battalion). The rest of the CWB and the 4th company lost the link. An hour of rest is granted to men exhausted with fatigue. The progression resumes an hour later in west direction. The 2^e and 3^e companies take the lead. During the night, from 0:30 to 5:30

GAP paratroopers will force the pace to reach the Mang-Yang. It is only around 8:30 that they will receive the orders to progress towards PK22. *"The physical fatigue of the days*

previous ones begins to be felt. Progression occurs under conditions difficult under high temperature. Soldiers suffering from "heat stroke", are evacuated on the vehicles of the Battalion Combat Train. » 35

6.30-7.30 am engagement with a rebel element falling on the rear guard. The lieutenant

Dureau is hurt. Several groups lose contact. 1 / Korea repels three attacks launched by the Viets about 5 kilometers from PK 22.

8:00 am the leading units 2nd and 3rd companies fall on a rebel company, 12 vietminh are slaughtered. This company once past surprise gathers and falls on the 1st company.

8h-11h00 radio contact with the observation Morane and with the PK22 station where find the first elements of the BM / 43th RIC that were able to cross the trap, and some Gunners from 2/10th RAC including Lieutenant Augustus Muller says: *"Arrived as Lieutenant at the BCS 2/10^e RAC, I took command of this battery in operation. This battery was composed of French, Cambodians, South Vietnamese Hindus and*

of some Africans. The captain who commanded her in title had been appointed by the head of body to command the rear base of Tu-Duc near Saigon. June 24, I was DLO (Detachment Linking and observation) at 520 e TDKQ. Unforgettable experience ! During the PK15 attack I was near GM's PC. Leaving the RC19 to reach PK22, we were lucky enough to come across a Viet track not mentioned on our maps. The night was so black that we could not distinguish the one that preceded us. We had to stand to each other so as not to break the column. During the night, we crossed two VM columns that passed so close that we could have touched each other. In the early morning we met sentinels who took us for theirs, but it did not last in the following minutes shots were heard everywhere behind us. The track that we borrowed was used by the Viets to join the RC19 towards the PK22, which allowed us to arrive first very early in the morning hosted by Colonel Buffin responsible for the operation. We were preceded by the PIM (Prisonniers Internés Military)! " 36 The paratroopers Gap arrive several hours later. "After long After walking, we arrive in the vicinity of PK22. The GAP settles defensively on the rumps overlooking the valley. Patrols begin to survey the surroundings. The first contacts with some survivors are taken in the late morning. They are men haggard, exhausted, often wounded. I get a lieutenant and four men from the colonial who managed to get out of the trap. We lead them on Mang Yang. In the afternoon arrive units less dislocated by the brutality of the Viet attack. » 37

35 WOD 7 e CHETOM PCBs. Frejus

36 Colonel Auguste Muller. Lieutenant at 2/10 th RAC. Letter of April 13, 2006, and interview of May 21, 2006.

37 Story of the Sergeant Kick 2 e Section 2 e company 3 e BPVN. Floreal review without date.

Another testimony is that of the leader of a scouting team Nungs (ethnic minority of the North

Tonkin) of 7 th PCBs: "We started our movement on June 18 in Pleiku direction of Ankhé, our progress was very slow due to the poor state of the road and bridges which posed some problems to the sappers. The third day we have discovered carcasses of tanks and GMC. It was probably the last attempt of failed road replenishment (in fact it is rather the April 12 ambush in which fell the folded GM11 of Ankhé, during which 19 GMC will be burned). We stopped one morning around 8:45 on a small peak facing the north a straight and long road of nearly 1500 meters and a post to our right at a distance of nearly 300 to 400 meters. Occupants in full preparation for their evacuation made us friendly signs. Was it PK 22, I can not say with

certainty? Our mission was to monitor the road for a possible recovery escaped from the PK 15 ambush. Suddenly two big sections progressing in our direction, equipped with US armament were advancing by hiding during the passages of our planes. It could be the ones we expected, yet the orders received by radio were to let them pass it could be survivors. The latter having seen us claimed to be part of the 4th ERVN but their attitude does not bode well especially as rather than joining us they sit at 90 meters from our position where the two Nung teams (weapons 12 MP and 2 machine guns of 30) hold them in the game. We

pick up in the evening to return to the bowl under the post " 38 .

11:00 liaison with the 4th company of the 1 / Korea is established. She too had to force

opposing barriers. Aviation does not remain inactive. Alerting since yesterday, the naval air dispatches a patrol of hunters above the convoy abandoned and looted, and

another above the survivors column. At 11:40 am a first parachuting of sanitary material is made by a Dakota on PK22. At 11:40 a helicopter lands for evacuate the first wounded. It is followed a few minutes later by a second device health. At 12:03 pm Morane observation reports a strong column progressing to 700 meters post PK22.

12:10 arrival of units at PK22, the 4th and 2nd companies with the deputy captain, the 3rd

company with the battalion commander. *"The night progression was very difficult. long time*

device head section, Warrant Officer Thuret and myself, the only European to 2^e section have paid of our person to push our men to go forward. After one walk of more than 18 hours in an inextricable ground interspersed with skirmishes with the

Viets increasingly aggressive, we finally arrive on PK 22 completely exhausted. " 39

12.30 am bombardment of Ankhé petrol depots. The last elements of the GAP 1 reach PK22 where many survivors have already been collected. *" Instructions collected from the survivors who took part in the action allow to reconstitute the general physiognomy of a brutal and massive ambush triggered at close range, and to estimate approximately the importance of the material losses suffered by the Groupement*

East: 240 vehicles and an artillery group. These numbers strike the imagination of Military 7th PCB unaccustomed to assessing losses as massive and fast. " 40

Dakotas parachuting supplies and ice bread, and evacuation of wounded by helicopter. *" The air activity continues from 15:30 to 15:45, it consists of the protection*

medical helicopters and the hundreds of GM42 vehicles heading for PK22.

38 Letter of the team leader Nung Ly Tang Bau of the 1st joint company of the 7th PCB to the author. 02.02.2005

39 Major Raymond Mouragues. Deputy sergeant in a rifle section outfielders to 3^e company 1 / Korea. Interview with the author. October 2005.

40 WOD 7^e CHETOM PCBs. Frejus

When the mission returns, the air force bombs Ankhé again. This time it is the deposits

South of the airstrip that are destroyed. From 16:50 to 18:15 the Chasse provides support

direct from PK22 post and attack Viet-Minh positions on "Locust" guiding (Morane observation). For the day of June 25 the naval air will perform no less than 16

aerial sorties . " ⁴¹ Throughout the afternoon, GAP parachutists recover isolated or more or less important groups, which are transported by truck to the neck of Mang

Yang where the GM 42 receives them. However, the position of the GAP becomes precarious the night goes

fall and the security of the collection element is no longer assured, it is decided to embark the

1 / Korea to Mang Yang Pass. The general fallback order is fixed in the way Next, the GM100 elements will leave in vehicles under the protection of GM units 42. The GAP back guard at 18:00 after destruction of the post.

18:00 A counter order cancels the previous provisions, the departure is set back at 23:30 to

allow paratroopers to recover the maximum number of survivors. *"Indeed, from 18:00, the elements of the GM 100 stimulated undoubtedly by the spectacle of the*

destruction of the PK22 station, join the collection units in increasing numbers croissant. This movement of strength begins to stabilize from 19:30, then decreases substantially as soon as it gets dark. The positions held 2^e and 3^e companies 7th PCB are being harassed by the Viet Minh, which is encouraging indigenous paratroopers to

desertion, asking them to kill their officers and join with arms the ranks of the People's Army. Moreover, wanting to take advantage of the confusion of the moment, others

rebels try to join our outposts by presenting themselves under the denomination of 520^e

TDKQ. » 42

9:00 p.m. arrival of the main CWB and the majority of the 2/10th RAC Lieutenant Pool

2/10^e RAC will be one of the latest arrivals. *"After the biggest of the hanging and the very effective intervention of the 11F "Bois-Belleau", I received the order to join PK22*

by the bush. After a very difficult nights (bamboo, rachs ..) the 23 survivors of my battery

many "Bergerols" who had joined me, arrived in view of PK22. The French flag still floated, but all around small fires smoked the area.

After a cautious approach, we ran into a bunch of 5th Cuirassiers who has collected us. Five minutes later, they left the post to join the Mang-Yang, with us on the beaches of the tanks. Having had the chance to find a board

dry, I slept the deepest night of my life. The next day when I woke up, I was happy to be alive, but deeply disgusted that we missed a great opportunity to fight with the Viet. " ⁴³ The losses in respect of the WB / 43^E RIC amounted to 49 killed 137 wounded and 104 prisoners. ⁴⁴ Dismantling the collection device, the station is evacuated,

the facilities are sabotaged. *"After 400 meters of progress, we start the slope in front of us. The first two GMCs task the former defenders of the post and their families. Women and children are already stuck to the tank, the 7 or 8 other trucks take the bridge carefully. Suddenly it's the drama: automatic weapons, explosions of grenades, bullets whistle on all sides. I went out to see better but this is passed so quickly, I could see in the action only two silhouettes bearing the even uniform (one army and the other not one pulling his captive towards the forest). I do not know*

how many trucks have burned but the tank is out of order. The Viets have prepared their shot

41 Operations Report. Chapter C. No. 123 GPA Staff. Groupe Arromanches Aircraft Carrier and Escorteur The Tunisian.

42 WOD 7^e CHETOM PCBs. Frejus

43 General Albert Billiards, lieutenant in 2/10th RAC. Letter to the author of April 7, 2006.

44 Sources: Fréjus CHETOM.16H284.

at night 150 meters from our camp on the other side of the road where we were waiting for them

not. I think at 9:00 unbearable against those who claimed ours, and we have not been ordered to eliminate them. » ⁴⁵

9:30 p.m. Departure to PK22 in mind, 7^e PCBs, GAP protected by tanks and various

42 units of GM on the course, the last elements of the GM 100 not evacuated, and the 3^e.

BPVN back guard. The last unit to leave PK 22 is that of Staff Sergeant Bouter at 3th Parachute Battalion Vietnamese *"I expect a good time the night is troubled that by the explosions of the ammunition of the post and by the projected gleams similar to*

flashes on the French flag still floating. " 46 Some unlucky ones thinking that the post of PK 22 is still held by the French army (the flag still floats in the morning of June 26) will be picked by the regular vietminh upon their arrival, after a day and a half of

forced walk.

The progression is fast, the pace accelerates. Given the atmosphere of insecurity and the importance of the time factor, the discipline of walking is maintained within all units. At 24:00 after a walk especially all the units arrive nearby of Mang Yang Pass, where they take position. The walking diary and operations of 7th Colonial Parachute Battalion is the only document that gives us a photograph of the physical state of this unit engaged in the collection operation. *"The fatigue is general.*

Some troopers (usually the youngest) have reached the limit of their resistance physical. During the stage, the heavy weapons soldiers, behaved remarkable way. Despite the intense effort required of the battalion, the morale of the entire

is very good. Sanitary evacuated figures for the 7th PCB by sickness or of physical wear during the day of the 25 rises to 15 Europeans and 25 natives. » 47

What can we say about the GM 100 units that had to deal with even more difficult conditions?

face the ambushes, cut through jungle while traveling the same distance, the most often without water or food for 36 hours? What about those who could not reach in time and who were forced to death marches to the camps of prisoners?

June 26 day marked by the reorganization of the units. *"A day was allowed for to rearrange the units at Mang-Yang, and to receive the necessary supplies supplies, weapons and ammunition while the GM 42 battalions cover at the furthest position. These parachutes were important to re-equip and to arm about half of the GM 100 units, three battalions around. The Mang-Yang pass fortunately had a favorable parachuting zone, wooded and covered with a thick jungle to the east, it was in the west very clear with a vast meadow in*

gentle slope, more than 500 meters wide, before reaching further down to Pleiku, an area

rather dense forest in a tormented relief. " 48 The third of the GM100 is reported missing (killed, wounded missing or prisoner). "From 10:55 am to 6:55 pm the fighter bombers of the Arromanches come again to provide air support to ground troops and the protection of the 7 Dakotas who parachuted weapons and supplies, as well as medical helicopters dispatched from Pleiku to pick up the worst casualties at the col Mang Yang. During this mission, the Hunt will bombard campaign work

45 Letter of the team leader Nung Ly Tang Bau of the 1st joint company of the 7th PCB to the author. 02.02.2005.

46 Story of the Sergeant Kick 2^e Section 2^e company 3^e BPVN. Floreal review without date.

47 JMO 7th CHETOM PCBs. Frejus

48 Operation Atlante by General J.Sockeel while Colonel commanding GM 42. Publication of the Association of Croix de Guerre.1992. CHETOM.18H29.

enemies 1 kilometer south of the station, as well as the artillery pieces at the tail of the convoy

abandoned on June 24th. This day will be marked by 19 sorties. » 49

On the 26th, the last survivors make their appearance at the Mang Yang Pass. After have wandered in the bush for more than 36 hours. But the more time passes, the more "Bells" are in contact with rebel elements. The misadventure that happened to the team

Nung LY Tang Bau 7th PCB will reproduce to the section of the Sergeant Kick 3^e Bawouan (BPVN): *"A Piper has arrived above us indicates a group important in camouflaged uniform, heading towards us. Surely some escaped survivors*

to the Viets. With the lieutenant we go down to the gymnastic step to meet them. the passage I rameute a group with a submachine gun and we settle at the limit of covered, binoculars in battery. And there, stupor! We discover that the troop that is heading

towards us is composed of Bo Dois covered with branches and maneuvering perfectly, hence the error of the air observer. " 50 The enemy units that work to meet the GM42 GAP and GM100 are not part of regional regiments but rather units more structured, like the dreaded 803 Regiment.

On the evening of the 26th GM 42 occupies Phu-Yen about ten kilometers from the Mang Yang Pass.

The rest of the units retreats to this new position.

June 27 at dawn, the post of Mang-Yang jumps. The goal of this day is to reach the Day Ya-Ayoun bridge 12 kilometers from Phu-Yen. This time the tank platoon opens the

road, followed by the 1 / Korea, 6th mountain battalion, the rest of the GM100 and other GM battalions 42. Most of the 803 regiment's attack is supported by the 1 / Korea and the 6th mountain battalion. The tanks of the 3/5^e Cuirassiers will be of a precious competition as the artillery that unlike what happened on June 24 was able to deploy his pieces and open fire on the opponent. At the end of the fighting the 1 / Korea has lost another 59 men.

June 28, the French are only 30 kilometers from Pleiku. Around 11:00 the avant-garde composed of two companies of the BM / 43^e RIC, 1/4 Korea^e Artillery Group Vietnamese (GAVN) and a platoon of the 3/5^e Cuirassiers, reaches a clearing of 500 meters

100 meters long, 3 kilometers from the intersection of RC 19 and RC 19bis said, "Plei Bon's suspender" when suddenly, a new ambush is revealed with a very dense fire volume. Led by Regiment 812, Regiment Battalion 89 and 90 108 reinforced by an elite unit (independent battalion 30), the automatic Mortar of and SKZ fall down on the whole column which have just come out in the clearing.

A dozen GM 42 vehicles are destroyed by enemy fire. With their experience acquired since June 24 each unit moved defensively from one side of the road, the car convoy hustles the vehicles burned and can take refuge in the center secure device. These are mainly the 1st Company 1 / Korea and PC battalion that will have to suffer from 12:15 as the day before the Vietminh assault waves. At 12

35 this company ceases to exist as a constituted unit, it owes its salvation only to the intervention of the 2^e company. The 3^e company meanwhile went to the aid of the PC.

Gunners managed 4th GAVN are firing all their guns as armored squad. Called in reinforcement, it is the B26 bombers who definitively stop the waves assault. The Bo Dois surprised in the open ground see melting bombs on them at 49 Operations Report. Chapter C. No. 123 GPA Staff. Groupe Arromanches Aircraft Carrier and Escorteur The Tunisian.

50 Story of the Sergeant Kick 2^e Section 2^e company 3^e BPVN. Floreal review without date.

Napalm is a mad flight that follows. The fight lasted more than an hour, the 1 / Korea has lost 42 men. *"Plei Bon marks the turning point of the battle of RC 19. All that could to be saved has been saved. The Viets had put the package to destroy all that was left of GM 100*

(for the Vietminh the Korean Battalion was to be destroyed). Bowed at RC 19, we have undergone repeated assaults without ever faltering, despite the inferiority of the number. our

Cambodians were heroic. » 51

June 29, June 30 arrival in Pleiku. "The show was scary; shaggy, in rags, mined for months by dysentery, the body covered with wounds, they looked more like escaped from a concentration camp only to soldiers of a regular unit. As for the units, they had suffered equally terrible losses. 84 men out of 222 remained at CCS, 1^{ers} and 2^e Battalions of Korea and the WB / 43^E RIC which included 834 men each beginning of the campaign were respectively with 452, 497 and 345 men. There occurs

to recall that these units had received reinforcements between December 1953 and May 1954 (the

last May 19th). Their total losses were therefore higher than those shown by the figures. The 2th group of 10th RAC had seen its workforce blend from 474 to 215 men. Having

lost all his cannons at PK 15 on June 24 the gunners had fought well as infantrymen on June 27 and 28. The lost material was also considerable, 85% of the vehicles,

including a whole armored platoon, had to be abandoned, as well as all the parts artillery; the transmissions had lost 68% of their equipment, and the infantry 50% of its

automatic weapons, machine guns and rifles. On the other hand, all the survivors had brought back their individual weapons. " 52 The city is put on the defensive. The DR 20 in

from the "Caserne Goupil" of St Germain en Laye joins what remains of the GM 100 in Pleiku. A battery placed under the command of Lieutenant Auguste Muller is hastily formed for the defense of Pleiku with airlifted guns of Haiphong and personal BCS 10th RAC. In less than three months of presence in Indochina those of DR 19 are veterans.

In his memoirs, General Raoul Salan, designer of the Ankhé evacuation operation dedicates only a few lines to this tragedy: "the troubles are precise. As Ankh is threatened I went there immediately and decided to leave before the garrison was removed by the

Vietminh forces rise from the coast to the plateaux. It's towards Pleiku where we are solidly implanted, that I give the order to bring back the three small battalions ... The operation

provided by a directive of General Ely dated 20 May last during his mission in Indochina had not yet, on June 20th, received from commencement of execution. She was becoming

more delicate, but it had to be realized. On June 24 the column starts moving, but too much

unfortunately too late. We always find the same mistakes ... Most of our vehicles are destroyed. It's a bad deal that makes me think that wherever he is may Viet-minh seek to destroy us to improve its position in Geneva. Ankhé and "Auvergne" are our last operations. I took all the responsibility on the spot. "

53 If, as General Salan claims, it was planned to release the GM100 by May 20, then why this waste of time? Unless it is his part of a date error. The

51 Major Raymond Mouragues. Deputy sergeant in a rifle section outfielders to 3^e company 1 / Korea. Interview with the author. October 2005.

52 Bernard Fall. Indochina 1946 1962. Chronicle of a revolutionary war. Ed Robert Laffont Paris 1962. P238.

53 Raoul Salan. "Memories. End of an Empire. Tome2. The Viet Minh my opponent. October 1946-October 1954. Editions Presses de la Cité. Paris 1971. p 428 to 430.

transmission of the evacuation order will not have been communicated until 19 June. "Bad

business, it is true, and for what benefit?

July 10 for unknown reasons, the GAP 1 is transferred to Tonkin, 4th Battalion of the GM 42 on the coast of Annam, the 3rd Company of 1 / Korea composed of Cambodians and southern men are sent to Ben Cat 50 kilometers from Saigon where she

will continue the fight until the ceasefire, just like the two very tried companies BM / 43^e RIC. On July 15th the press will announce briefly: "*An attempt of infiltration*

of the Ben-Cat station, artillery park near Saigon, 20 dead and 8

prisoners. " ⁵⁴ In accordance with the Geneva Accords, the ceasefire takes the 1st August

at the Annam Center and on August 11th in the South. The GM 100 will be officially dissolved on 1st

septembre 1954. His staff returned to various units.

1st September in the framework of the expeditionary force reorganization, a Aboriginal new regiment is created, the choice of Staff is focused on the 43th ICN. This

regiment will consist of three battalions forming corps and set up from 1st September at BMI, BM / 43^e RIC, and WB / 11^e RIC. The CCS of the GM 100 becomes

regimental command company, North African personnel are replaced by indigenous people.

The BMI

becomes 1/43th RIC.

The BM / 43^e RIC

becomes 2/43th RIC, and absorbs 3^e company 1 / Korea.

The BM / 11^e RIC

becomes 3/43th RIC.

The symbolic detachment of Seoul is administratively attached to the 2/43^e RIC. This detachment of about thirty soldiers who are guarding the flag of the East Korean battalion

always present in Korea. ⁵⁵

END

54 Daily The independent of the Eastern Pyrenees of July 16th, 1954.

55 JMO 43^e RIC.CHETOM.Frue.16H284.

Thanks

General Girard then Lieutenant at the EM of GM 100.

General Albert Billiards, lieutenant in 2/10th RAC

Colonel Auguste Muller. Lieutenant at the BCS of the 2/10^e RAC.

Major Raymond Mouragues. Sergeant to 3^e company 1 / Korea

Colonel Michel Gengembre. Sergeant in the 4th Company, 1 / Korea.

Colonel André Salvat. Commander CCS.100

Master Corporal René Pinot CCB 2 / Korea

Sergeant Ollivier Guy 1 / Korea.

Team Leader Nung Ly Tang Bau 1st company of the 7th PCB

Sergeant Gabaye 2nd CMT

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