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File 9

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1 March 1968

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# PRESIDENTIAL OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEF



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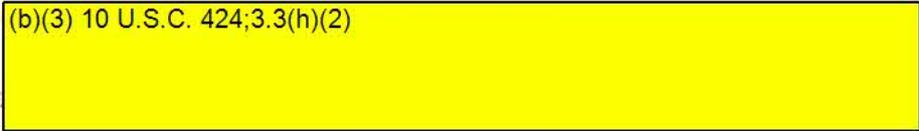
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## OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS

SOUTHEAST ASIA

SUMMARY: No significant enemy contacts were reported in South Vietnam yesterday as US and ARVN forces continued operations to locate and destroy enemy units and installations. The enemy shelled Tan Son Nhut Air Base and the airstrip at Duc Hoa, but casualties and damages were not significant. Redispositioning of enemy units continues, mainly in the coastal and western highlands area of 2nd Corps. Enemy trawlers have been detected and destroyed in an apparent coordinated infiltration attempt.

SOUTH VIETNAM1ST CORPS

No significant enemy activity was reported in Quang Tri Province. US Marine defensive positions at Khe Sanh and elsewhere near the DMZ continue to be hit by intermittent, harassing mortar and artillery fire. US units continue to sweep critical areas, but no significant enemy contacts were reported. In 22 separate small-unit actions throughout the 1st Corps area 11 enemy were killed and one suspect was detained, while US units had 17 men wounded.

There are reports that the enemy plans to attack Quang Tri and Quang Ngai cities in early March. A prisoner says that attacks on Khe Sanh and Quang Tri City will be conducted at the same time.

The NVA 31st Regiment southwest of Da Nang has been instructed to assess its entire strength and equipment and to prepare to receive a communications plan guaranteeing support for a forthcoming mission after 1 March.

Intercepts reveal the possible movement of 82-mm recoilless rifles and 75-mm artillery along the Route 547 supply line through the A Shau Valley. Vehicle and tank staging areas are now located near Ta Luong on Route 547. This activity may be preparatory to renewed operations against Hue (described, in a 1 February COSVN document as a "must-win" area).

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MILITARY CASUALTIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

1 MARCH 1968

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	24 Hrs	Current Week	Cumula-	Cumula-	Cumula-
	Ending	11 AM EST	tive	tive	tive
	11 AM EST	24 Feb 68	From	From	From
	29 Feb 68	11 AM EST	1 Jan 68	1 Jan 67	1 Jan 61
	28 Feb 68	28 Feb 68			
UNITED STATES <sup>a</sup>					
Killed	61	300	2,987	12,152	19,009
Wounded Not Hosp	75	825	7,036	37,690	54,811
Wounded Hosp	82	893	9,063	41,434	62,051
Captured	0	2	9	144	240
Missing	3	7	313	584	960
SOUTH VIETNAM					
Killed	22	157	3,216	14,096	56,386
Wounded	79	560	9,741	39,189	124,531
Missing/Captured	1	78	1,182	3,522	28,526
OTHER ALLIED					
Killed	2	3	240	1,345	1,943
Wounded	8	26	518	2,836	4,566
Missing/Captured	0	0	2	5	22
VIET CONG/NVA					
Killed	413	3,211	49,442	137,523	296,676
Wounded	570	4,817	76,164	206,286	445,015
(estimate <sup>b</sup> )					

a. U.S. Casualties include Laos and Vietnam.

b. Estimate based on a 1.5 to 1 Wounded to Killed ratio.

c. The figures shown in column (1) are preliminary, unrefined battlefield reported casualties received from COMUSMACV daily.

d. The figures in columns (2) through (5) are verified figures representing casualties reported during the period indicated.

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Early today a US Air Force C-123K aircraft, while taking off from the Khe Sanh Air Base after a resupply mission, was hit by an incoming mortar round. The aircraft caught fire on the runway and was destroyed. One crewman was wounded.

### 2ND CORPS

Early yesterday a US infantry company accompanied by an ARVN unit attacked an element of the NVA 174th Regiment 12 miles northeast of Kontum and in a 6-hour fight killed 22 of the enemy and captured five others. One US soldier was wounded. The continuing threat to Kontum is indicated by reconnaissance activity against the airfield and by the recent deployment south from the Dak To area of elements of the NVA 24th and 174th Regiments, now positioned near the city. There is a concentration of B3 Front units now located in extreme northeast Pleiku Province. The units have moved some 15 miles generally eastward since early last week -- possibly in reaction to B-52 strikes. The NVA 32d Regiment has moved to within 10 miles north of Ban Me Thuot. The 33rd Regiment is also nearby and other enemy elements are just southwest of the city.

### 3RD CORPS

On 28 February an ARVN Ranger unit discovered an enemy base camp 7 miles southwest of Saigon. An ammunition cache was seized and one enemy was killed. Three individual weapons, 36,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition, 137 anti-tank rockets, some hand grenades, and 15 pounds of TNT were captured.

An ARVN battalion engaged an enemy force 15 miles south of Saigon and in a brief violent attack, which ended early yesterday morning, killed 36 enemy. Twenty-four of the enemy were captured along with 5 individual weapons and one crew-served weapon. ARVN casualties were placed at 10 killed and 17 wounded. The Viet Cong are telling farmers in this area that the cities are no longer secure and that their relatives should move out to the countryside. A COSVN intelligence unit yesterday moved into the northeastern part of Long An Province. Further enemy activity is expected.

Yesterday morning the Duc Hoa airstrip, 16 miles west of Saigon, was hit by 100-120 rounds of 82-mm mortar fire. Casualties were 3 killed (1 US and 2 ARVN) and 16 wounded (2 US and 14 ARVN). One helicopter was destroyed. Six hours later Tan Son Nhut Air Base was hit by 16 rounds of 122-mm rocket fire. Six persons were wounded and a radar set was destroyed. One transport aircraft, 2 trucks, and 2 buildings sustained minor damage.

#### 4TH CORPS

There was no significant military activity yesterday. The enemy continued to attack isolated outposts and has now begun to hit motor transportation in an effort to hamper civilian movement and to further strain city economies. Main command elements of Military Region 3 have moved southward away from the Can Tho area, thus reducing the capability for coordinated ground assaults against the city.

MARKET TIME OPERATIONS: Yesterday afternoon 3 trawlers, which were attempting to land supplies on the east coast of South Vietnam, were destroyed by US and SVN naval units patrolling the coast of SVN. A fourth trawler approaching the coast north of Qui Nhon, apparently detected a trap, reversed its course and fled to the open sea. One junk containing arms and ammunition was captured at the mouth of the Cua Viet River; 3 other junks standing just off shore were put under surveillance. These actions indicate an urgent enemy resupply effort to his units in the coastal lowlands. Their failure could adversely affect enemy plans for large-scale attacks in the near future.

ARC LIGHT OPERATIONS: Yesterday 42 B-52s struck enemy troop concentrations, artillery, and fighting positions within an 8-mile radius of Khe Sanh.

Eighteen other B-52s bombed enemy troop concentrations near Saigon and enemy transportation and road construction units near A Chau Valley.

NORTH VIETNAM

ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS: Yesterday US tactical aircraft flew 117 sorties over North Vietnam. Yesterday afternoon an A-6 aircraft struck Haiphong Railroad and Highway Bridge west of Haiphong and another A-6 attacked Hanoi Port. Both aircraft employed radar release techniques to strike the targets. Pilots reported the strikes were successful, but darkness and weather precluded an assessment of damages.

IL-28 OPERATIONS: The 3 IL-28 bombers based at Phuc Yen continue to fly routine training missions in the area north of Kep and west of Lang Son. They keep close enough to the Chinese border to be able to slip across at the approach of US strike aircraft. The IL-28s usually have MIG cover.

TRANSPORT FLIGHTS: North Vietnamese AN-2 light transport aircraft have been detected flying from Hanoi to the area south of Vinh, probably near the DMZ. The mission of these flights is not known, but AN-2s have been used in both logistic and tactical operations. They can operate as far south as northern SVN. Each plane can carry about a ton of cargo or 10 passengers. Recent aerial photographs suggest that enemy activity at two airstrips in the A Shau area may involve preparations to provide an air drop or an air landing capability there.

LAOS

BARREL ROLL AND STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS: Two hundred and eighty-three sorties were flown in Laos yesterday of which 171 were in the area adjacent to Khe Sanh. Twenty-nine trucks and 2 bulldozers were destroyed.

LATE ITEMSOUTH VIETNAM

For the third consecutive day favorable weather conditions at Khe Sanh permitted the acquisition of remunerative targets for attacks by tactical aircraft and the delivery of accurate artillery fire on point targets. A total of 363 tactical air sorties were flown in support of Khe Sanh yesterday. These strikes caused numerous secondary explosions and secondary fires. Five enemy weapons positions, 22 bunkers, and 6 trucks were destroyed or damaged and successful strikes were made against enemy troops in the open. Several small unit skirmishes took place during the day when the enemy launched probes against the Khe Sanh defenses. Thirteen enemy were killed in these skirmishes with no friendly casualties reported. During the 24-hour period ending at 8:00 PM EST last night (9:00 AM, 1 March, Saigon time) a total of 195 rounds of mixed mortar, artillery, and rocket fire impacted in the Khe Sanh area wounding 14 Marines. Elsewhere along the DMZ, harassing fire against US positions comprised the major enemy activity.

A total of 120 rounds of mortar and artillery fire impacted at Dong Ha, Con Thien, and Camp Carroll wounding 7 Marines. A US Marine battalion conducting a sweep of the area around Camp Carroll killed 34 enemy. There were no Marine casualties.

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