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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;3.3(h)(2)

5 March 1968

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**PRESIDENTIAL  
OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE  
BRIEF**



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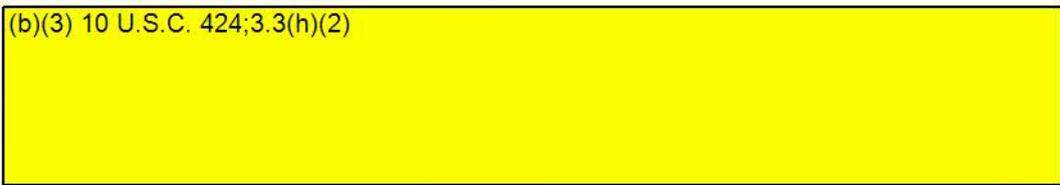
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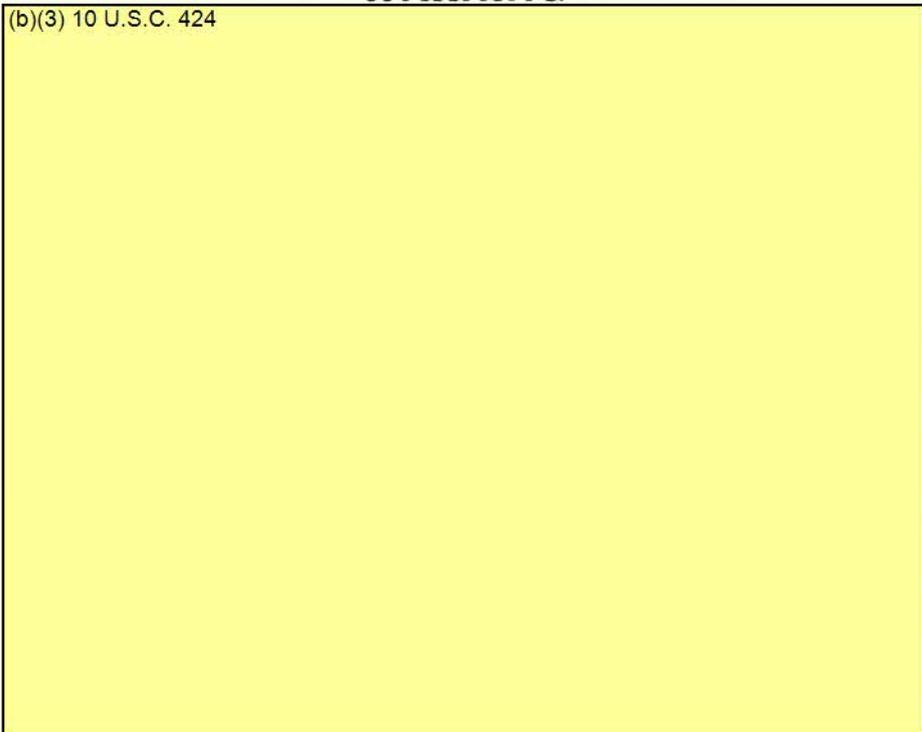
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**OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS**



SOUTHEAST ASIA

SUMMARY: Enemy-initiated ground actions were prevalent in the 2d Corps area yesterday. Combined US and ARVN forces were active in locating and engaging the enemy with success. In addition, Regional and Popular Forces were successful in their encounters. Enemy casualties were more than doubled from the previous period. The threat to Hue/Phu Bai is now significant and there is a rapidly growing possibility of imminent attack. Enemy force redistribution continues in several other locations in 1st and 2d Corps areas and in the Saigon-Bien Hoa areas to the south. There are continuing reports that the enemy intends to maintain pressure on the cities while attempting to strengthen his military-political posture in the hinterland. There are also a number of strong signs that he is having supply problems in the face of allied attacks.

SOUTH VIETNAM

1ST CORPS

Early yesterday in an area 32 miles south-southeast of Da Nang, US Army elements engaged the enemy in two separate contacts. In the first contact, which lasted 7 hours, 60 enemy were killed while US Army casualties were 22 wounded. In the second engagement, there were no US casualties while the enemy had 8 killed.

Tactical air strikes on enemy positions 6 miles north-northeast of Hue resulted in 60 enemy killed. Friendly casualties during this engagement were one US killed and 3 wounded -- the air controller aircraft directing the tactical air strikes was hit by enemy ground fire.

There is a rapidly mounting volume of strong evidence revealing a significant buildup of NVA forces around Hue. Elements of at least 2 battalions of the 90th Regiment of the NVA 324B Division are confirmed present along with elements of this division's 803rd Regiment, and 2 battalions of the 24th Regiment of NVA 304th Division may also be there. The NVA 4th Regiment is still generally east of the city. What is believed to be a staging area has been identified to the southwest and enemy units there were increased on Sunday. The wording of an intercepted enemy order raises the possibility that an attack could come at any time. Meanwhile, the

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MILITARY CASUALTIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

5 MARCH 1968

	(1) 24 Hrs Ending 11 AM EST 4 MAR 68	(2) Current Week 11 AM EST 2 MAR 68 Through 11 AM EST 3 MAR 68	(3) Cumula- tive From 1 Jan 68	(4) Cumula- tive From 1 Jan 67	(5) Cumula- tive From 1 Jan 61
UNITED STATES <sup>a</sup>					
Killed	37	62	3,291	12,456	19,313
Wounded Not Hosp	118	33	9,330	37,984	55,105
Wounded Hosp	127	36	9,311	41,682	62,299
Captured	0	0	9	144	240
Missing	3	7	257	528	890
SOUTH VIETNAM					
Killed	35	85	3,369	14,249	56,539
Wounded	146	232	10,187	39,635	124,977
Missing/Captured	0	60	1,243	3,583	28,587
OTHER ALLIED					
Killed	0	9	254	1,359	1,957
Wounded	1	20	560	2,878	4,608
Missing/Captured	0	0	2	5	22
VIET CONG/NVA					
Killed	1,085	1,142	51,716	139,797	298,950
Wounded (estimate <sup>b</sup> )	1,628	1,714	77,527	209,649	448,378

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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area of operations of NVA 320th Division has apparently been extended eastward and now runs from Camp Carroll to the coast near Quang Tri City where the main body of the 803rd Regiment as well as the 812th Regiment remain as a threat. Elsewhere, aerial photographs of 3 March identified a Soviet armored personnel carrier 17 miles west of Khe Sanh; it may be armed with 14.5-mm instead of its normal 7.62-mm machine guns. Enemy units continue to relocate in Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai, and Quang Nam provinces. Messages from Military Region 5's Party Committee to all its subordinates are at an unusually high level.

An update of yesterday's report on the attack against the Marble Mountain Air Facility indicates that 1 helicopter was destroyed and 38 damaged.

### 2ND CORPS

At Phu My, in Binh Dinh Province, the District Headquarters and jail were attacked by an enemy company employing mortar and rocket fire. After a 50-minute engagement, the enemy was forced to break contact by Regional and Popular Forces supported by aircraft and artillery. The enemy left 73 killed while Popular Forces casualties were 1 killed and 2 wounded.

ARVN and US forces engaged the enemy in two separate contacts near Qui Nhon, yesterday. In a 10-minute ARVN contact, the enemy left 73 dead while ARVN losses were 14 killed and 17 wounded. Two US Army were wounded in their engagement while the enemy had 21 killed. In still another engagement near Qui Nhon, the District Headquarters was attacked by two enemy companies. In this contact of 3½ hours, Regional and Popular Forces supported by artillery and aircraft fire killed 125 of the enemy while Popular Forces casualties were only 6 wounded.

Yesterday near Ban Me Thout, two ARVN battalions, while conducting a cordon-and-search operation, killed 85 of the enemy in a 3-hour battle. ARVN casualties were 4 killed and two wounded.

In a major action at Tuy Hoa on 3 March an ARVN battalion was attacked by an unknown-sized enemy force. A US Army company joined the fierce battle which lasted for 10½ hours. Heavy enemy losses were reported with 206 killed and 18 individual and 10 crew-served weapons seized; 16 persons were

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detained. US losses were 5 killed, 16 wounded, 2 missing; 4 APCs, four .50 caliber machine guns, 2 M-60 machine guns and 11 M-16 rifles were destroyed. The ARVN battalion suffered 15 killed and 53 wounded.

Elements of NVA 1st and 10th Divisions are relocating in the Kontum and Pleiku city areas. There has been an increase in food and tax collections and assassinations of hamlet/village chiefs. There are intelligence indications of a shortage of ammunition in several western highlands areas and in the Nha Trang City area on the coast; this situation tends to be borne out by the relatively few rounds fired during the 3-4 March attacks. Females were also used in some of the attacks, indicating a shortage of manpower.

### 3RD CORPS

There was no significant activity reported yesterday; however, in one 8-hour engagement 18 miles north-northeast of Saigon, a US Army battalion on a reconnaissance mission killed 10 of the enemy. Three US Army were killed and 12 wounded.

There has been an accentuation of earlier enemy interest in Xuan Loc. He is now collecting detailed information on the ARVN 18th Division's base and American units/positions there. Elements of the NVA 7th Division now apparently have the mission of "containing" the US 1st Infantry Division at the Lai Khe Base Camp. There is evidence that enemy units are having food and ammunition problems. Meanwhile, attacks on river crossings and lines of communication continue in the Saigon area as do efforts, not particularly successful so far, at intimidation and propagandizing of government workers in the neighboring provinces.

### 4TH CORPS

Yesterday, a one-day ARVN search-and-destroy mission near Cao Lanh terminated. ARVN casualties were only 4 wounded, while 41 of the enemy were killed and 3 others detained.

The enemy is maintaining pressure on the cities with harassing mortar fire while avoiding large-scale encounters with friendly forces and proceeding to recruit, resupply, and propagandize. A new slogan has appeared -- "attack the towns to liberate the country-side". Vietnamese security services

estimate that the Tet offensive here (and elsewhere) was designed as a shock to facilitate future military and political activity.

ARC LIGHT OPERATIONS: Thirty-six Air Force B-52s bombed to within one mile of Khe Sanh yesterday, concentrating on enemy fortifications, mortar/artillery positions, supplies, and tunnel complexes. Twenty-four additional B-52s struck troop concentrations, base camps, tunnel complexes, and artillery positions in the area of Hue and Saigon.

#### NORTH VIETNAM

ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS: US tactical aircraft flew 138 sorties over NVN yesterday. All ALFA strikes scheduled were cancelled due to unsuitable weather over the targets. Six USAF F-105s hit the Dong Hoi Airfield, 5 miles northwest of Dong Hoi. Pilots reported that the runway was cratered in 8 places.

#### LAOS

BARREL ROLL AND STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS: There were 171 sorties flown in Laos yesterday, with 95 in the sector adjacent to Khe Sanh. Pilots reported 34 trucks destroyed.

GROUND ACTIVITY: The enemy continues to evidence keen interest in the situation on Route 23 near Saravane; this is a potential supply route to southern Laos and SVN. A possible clue to his interest in Lao Ngam to the south is suggested by a North Vietnamese Army prisoner's statement that his unit had been ordered to capture the place at all costs.

LATE ITEM1ST CORPS

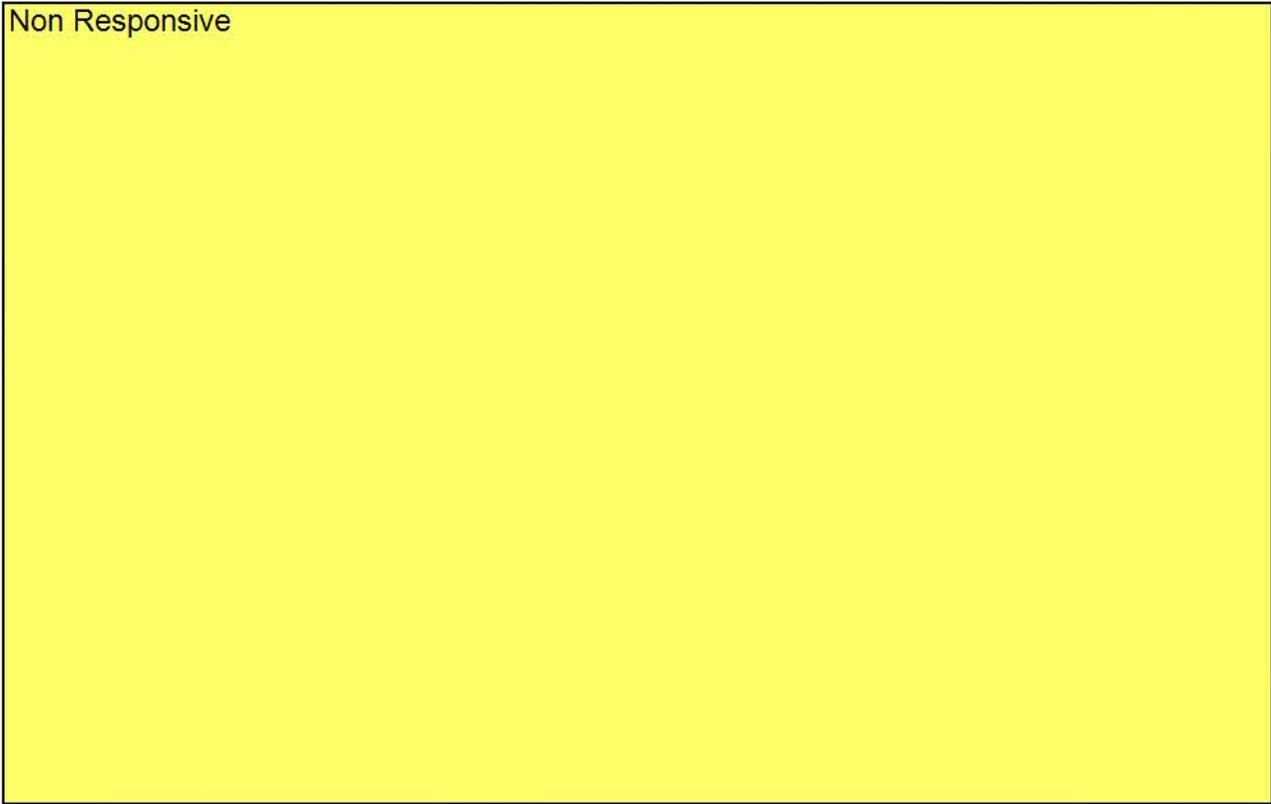
For the 4th consecutive day enemy activity at Khe Sanh was minimal and consisted primarily of sporadic shelling of the defensive positions and the Khe Sanh Combat Base. A total of 151 rounds of enemy mortar and artillery fire impacted in the area killing 3 US Marines and wounding 24. Although weather conditions were generally poor, controlled fixed wing aircraft were successfully utilized in the destruction of 6 bunkers, 1 mortar position, 4 structures and 7 NVA. Additionally, supporting arms elements expended 2,756 mixed artillery/mortar fire in suppressing enemy fire and destroying their positions. Tactical air missions flown in support of Khe Sanh totaled 324 sorties. Visual bomb damage including 1 secondary explosion, 13 secondary fires, 20 roads cut, 2 weapons positions destroyed, 1 building destroyed, 10 trucks destroyed, 4 structures destroyed, 6 bunkers destroyed, and 22 enemy killed.

Elsewhere within Northern Quang Tri there was some ground activity with rather heavy enemy resistance reported in the vicinity of Con Thien. In three small-unit engagements 18 NVA were killed. Three US Marines were killed and 5 wounded. A total of 129 rounds of mortar and artillery fell in the area bordering the DMZ resulting in 3 killed and 16 wounded.

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CAMBODIA: Intercepts reveal that anti-government activity by Red Cambodians is intensifying in the west and southwest. Countervailing actions are being taken by government military units, but the situation at present appears to be a standoff. The government is particularly concerned lest the Reds obtain arms, and, perhaps with this in mind, is increasing its surveillance of the Viet Cong. So far Prince Sihanouk retains strong popular support. Meanwhile, there is evidence that the South Vietnamese Liberation Army itself is in direct charge of security measures to conceal, so far as possible, the presence of Viet Cong in Cambodian territory along the border.

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