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

27 February 1968

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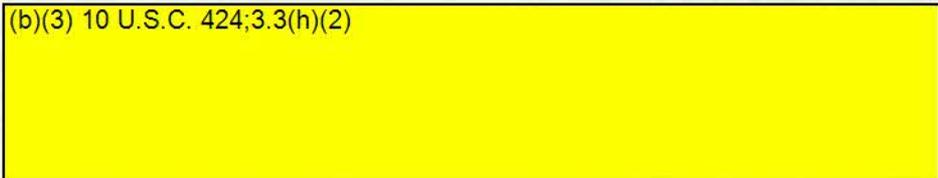
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OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS



SOUTHEAST ASIA

SUMMARY: Enemy activity in South Vietnam continued at a moderate level over the past 24 hours, with continued harassing mortar and rocket attacks. There were no major ground actions reported; however, enemy tanks were engaged for the first time in the 3d Corps area. Tactical aircraft and B-52s continued to blast the enemy in the Khe Sanh area. In the Saigon area the continued presence of elements of 3 divisions to the north reflects the enemy's determination to maintain a sizeable threat to the city and its environs, probably in an effort to tie down allied forces while he reasserts his presence in the hinterland. Meanwhile, interdiction of key lines of communications around Saigon and the consequent disruption of the city's economy also appears to be a major current enemy objective. Elsewhere, the enemy is maintaining an active threat to such important areas as Dak To and Kontum, Pleiku, and Quang Tri cities.

SOUTH VIETNAM

1ST CORPS

The Dong Ha combat base and boat ramp area came under prolonged enemy shelling as about 150 rounds of mixed artillery, rocket and mortar fire fell during a 10-hour period. US casualties were one killed and 22 wounded. Materiel destruction included ten to twenty thousand gallons of diesel fuel, a pad of ammunition, 4 electric generators, two 5-ton trucks, and 2 troop huts. Two helicopters, 2 armored personnel carriers, 4 trucks, and 3 troop huts were damaged. Meanwhile, intercepts indicate that 4 artillery battalions will be moving along Route 1A in North Vietnam's Ha Tinh Province between now and next Tuesday. Their destination is not yet known, but they may be intended to augment the enemy's firepower in the DMZ area.

An Air Force O-1E aircraft on a forward air control mission was shot down by enemy ground fire 19 miles southwest of Da Nang, destroying the aircraft. Rapid recovery operations succeeded in rescuing the pilot.

A tactical air support aircraft accidentally fired 2 rockets into a Marine observation post, killing one Marine, 3 miles north of Khe Sanh village. Meanwhile, the major

MILITARY CASUALTIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

27 FEBRUARY 1968

	(1) 24 Hrs Ending 11 AM EST 26 FEB 68	(2) Current Week 11 AM EST 24 FEB 68 Through 11 AM EST 25 FEB 68	(3) Cumula- tive From 1 Jan 68	(4) Cumula- tive From 1 Jan 67	(5) Cumula- tive From 1 Jan 61
UNITED STATES ^a					
Killed	43	135	2,822	11,987	18,844
Wounded Not Hosp	129	87	7,298	36,952	54,073
Wounded Hosp	140	95	8,265	40,636	61,253
Captured	0	0	7	142	238
Missing	0	0	306	577	953
SOUTH VIETNAM					
Killed	14	84	3,143	14,023	56,313
Wounded	113	286	9,467	38,915	124,157
Missing/Captured	18	13	1,117	3,457	28,461
OTHER ALLIED					
Killed	1	0	237	1,342	1,940
Wounded	8	10	502	2,820	4,550
Missing/Captured	0	0	2	5	22
VIET CONG/NVA					
Killed	740	1,238	47,469	135,550	294,703
Wounded (estimate ^b)	1,110	1,857	71,204	203,326	442,055

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.

North Vietnamese command entity controlling enemy units around Khe Sanh may have moved some 6 miles closer to the border area opposite Khe Sanh. Detailed enemy reconnaissance and artillery spotting activity continues. A number of radio terminals serving enemy regiments have moved to positions south of the combat base. These actions are consistent with the enemy's continuing efforts to improve his tactical situation around Khe Sanh.

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;3.3(h) continuing enemy preparations for possible offensive operations in the coastal lowlands along the border between Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. Elements of all 3 regiments of the North Vietnamese 324B Division may now be in this general area which is not far from Quang Tri City. The enemy may intend to attack the city at a time of his choosing or, at least, to pose the threat of such action with a view to frightening the populace.

2ND CORPS

Two US Army companies on a combat assault mission, 13 miles west-northwest of Dak To, engaged an enemy platoon in a 3½-hour battle late Sunday. The enemy broke contact leaving 21 killed, 9 weapons and a quantity of miscellaneous equipment. US casualties were light with one killed, 9 wounded and a UH-1H helicopter heavily damaged.

Fifteen US Army personnel were wounded and 2 helicopters damaged at Camp Holloway, 3 miles east of Pleiku, when the enemy lobbed an estimated 75 rounds of 82-millimeter mortar fire at the camp during a 7-minute period yesterday. The counter mortar plan was fired with unknown results.

The above activity coincides with continuing intelligence indications that the enemy is preparing for further attacks in the western Central Highlands area. Thus, intercepts point to the possibility of mortar and rocket attacks in western Pleiku, Kontum, and Darlac Provinces. The Plei Djerong Special Forces Camp and the Dak To area appear to be marked for such attacks. The timing and intensity of such attacks is not clear. There has been reference to an "N Day" operation in northern Darlac Province, but the date was not specified. However, one intercept indicates that action against Route 15 and populated areas west of Pleiku City are to be staged sometime between today and Thursday. Such attacks may be intended not only to inflict casualties but also to demonstrate the enemy's presence to the area's people.

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3RD CORPS

Twelve Air America aircraft received light damage yesterday when 7 rounds of enemy 122-millimeter rocket fire fell on Tan Son Nhut airfield. There were no friendly casualties.

An enemy camp containing 3 unknown type tanks and a half track vehicle was attacked by a US Army Special Forces team and a CIDG element on 26 February, 10 miles west-southwest of Tay Ninh City. Secondary explosions killed 30 enemy when one of the tanks was destroyed by a shoulder-fired light anti-tank weapon. The remaining 2 tanks and the half track withdrew, but the enemy troops counter-attacked and friendly forces were forced to withdraw due to a shortage of ammunition. Friendly casualties were 2 wounded (1 US and 1 CIDG).

In the Saigon area the enemy is continuing his efforts to cut key lines of communication and to disrupt the city's economy. The headquarters of the Viet Cong 5th and 9th Divisions have relocated northward to the northern part of Bien Hoa Province, probably to coordinate logistics resupply and to receive replacements. They might then be used in a ground assault on Saigon, but there are no clear indications of this at present. It is not unlikely that the enemy will continue to pose just such a threat, however, while proceeding to try to tie down allied forces and gain popular support.

4TH CORPS

Twenty enemy were killed and 12 persons detained, 3 miles west of Can Tho when a US Army company engaged an estimated reinforced enemy company. A US battalion and an additional US company reinforced the engaged unit, while tactical air strikes and artillery also provided support during the day-long action which ended as the enemy withdrew. Fourteen US were killed and 51 wounded in this action.

ARC LIGHT OPERATIONS: B-52s continued to pound the enemy around Khe Sanh yesterday as 32 aircraft struck enemy troop concentrations, fortifications, and artillery positions.

Twenty-four additional B-52s struck enemy troop concentrations, supply storage areas, and vehicles near Hue, Pleiku, and Saigon.

NORTH VIETNAM

ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS: Ninety total sorties were flown over North Vietnam yesterday as unfavorable weather continued to limit air operations. Three A-6 aircraft, individually attacked the Haiphong railroad yard, West (2 miles north-northwest of Haiphong), the Phu Ly railroad yard (33 miles south of Hanoi), and the Bac Thuong Airfield (22 miles west-northwest of Thanh Hoa), using electronic equipment techniques. In these attacks, darkness precluded damage assessment.

LAOS

BARREL ROLL AND STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS: Twenty-six trucks were reported destroyed by tactical air strikes over Laos yesterday as 207 total sorties were flown with 117 of these in the sector adjacent to the Khe Sanh area.

ENEMY GROUND ACTIVITY: The North Vietnamese are making a maximum effort to prepare the battlefield for an attack on radar site 85 in the north. It is doubtful that the site can continue to operate very much longer, according to US officials in Vientiane. In the south, the enemy continues to envelop Attapeu town and Lao military forces are planning to evacuate the garrison. The situation at Saravane and Lao Ngam is reported quiet. Lao military leaders say they intend to hold Saravane at all costs.

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