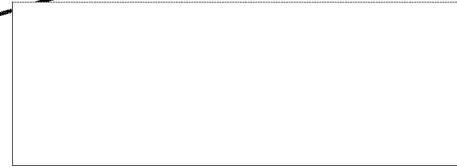


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

~~Top Secret~~

c 194

21 November 1967

3.5(c)



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3.5(c)

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3.5(c)

21 November 1967

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

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Vietnam: Situation report. (Page 3)

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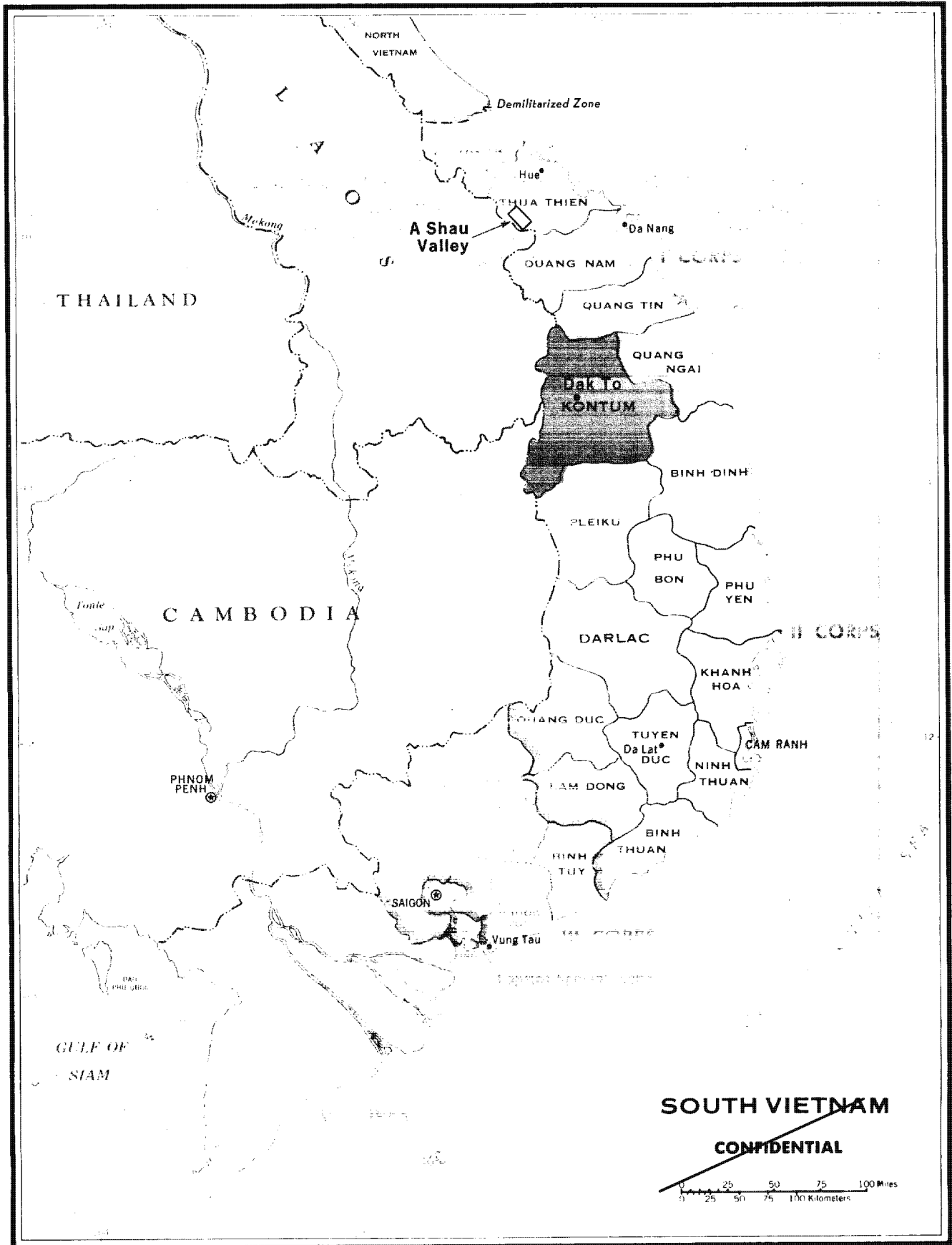
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21 Nov 67 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN Map

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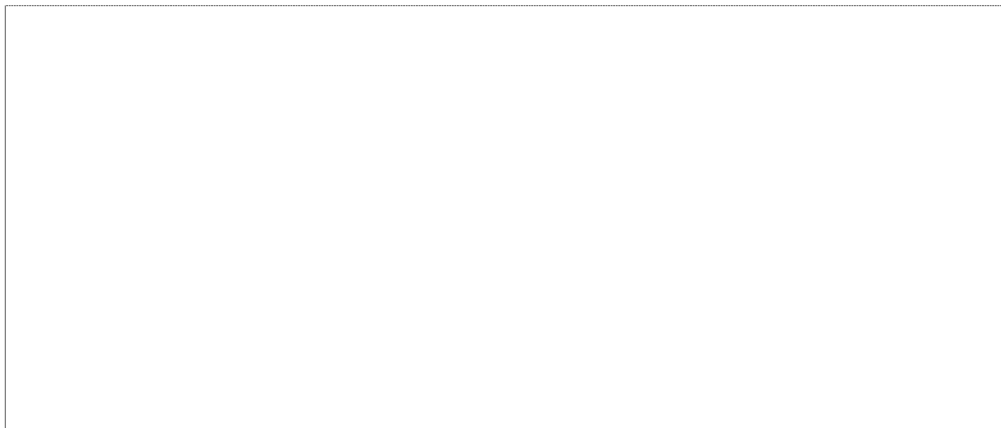
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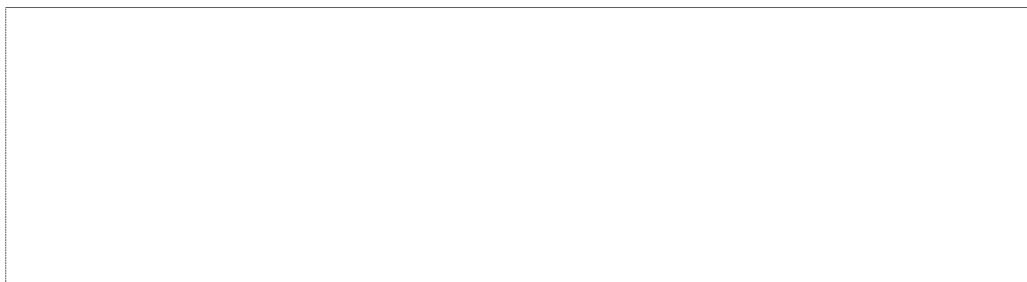
South Vietnam: New fighting broke out southwest of Dak To on 20 November in what was described as the most intensive action in the enemy's two-week-old highlands campaign.

Preliminary casualty reports on this engagement show heavy American losses; there are no figures yet on enemy casualties. The North Vietnamese 174th Regiment was apparently engaged in the largest of the recent actions. This is the first time the unit has been committed to battle in the current campaign.

There has been no evidence of any significant enemy withdrawals from the battle area in the highlands, and it appears that the fighting will continue.



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21 Nov 67

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The 304th Division has trained a number of North Vietnamese units already in South Vietnam. The 66th Regiment, now involved in the fighting near Dak To, was once under the 304th. Other elements of the division infiltrated into the two northern provinces of South Vietnam during 1967.

In the Laos panhandle, the 31st Regiment of the 341st North Vietnamese Division was located on 19 November just north of Route 922. This is some 55 miles south of its location on 11 November. It could be headed for the A Chau Valley area in South Vietnam. Another possibility would be to take up positions near the US Marine outpost at Khe Sanh.

In the air war, three more US aircraft were downed on 20 November, bringing to 18 the number of US planes lost during the past five days.

These losses appear to be the result of a vigorous application by Hanoi of its usual air defense procedures, coupled with a large number of US strikes against heavily defended targets in the Hanoi-Haiphong area.

There has been a particularly high level of surface-to-air missile and conventional antiaircraft fire. SAMs accounted for ten of the 18 planes, while conventional antiaircraft fire was responsible for two. The SAM success probably can be attributed to the large number of missiles fired. [REDACTED]

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MIG fighters accounted for two, and possibly four, planes. The small MIG force remaining in North Vietnam has been unusually active and aggressive, but except for an attempted recovery in China and pursuit of a US reconnaissance aircraft into Laos, has not used any unorthodox tactics in the past few days. [REDACTED]

3.5(c)

21 Nov 67

4

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3.5(c)

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