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28 March 1968

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DAILY JOINT STAFF
OPS - INT
SUMMARY



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The DAILY JOINT STAFF OPERATIONS/INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY is a digest of selective operational and intelligence reports which is produced by the National Military Command Center, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defense Intelligence Agency. 3.3(h)(2);(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424

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OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS



SOUTHEAST ASIA

SUMMARY: Contact with the enemy throughout South Vietnam continues to be moderate and scattered. In the 1st Corps area, two offensive actions by US and ARVN forces resulted in 135 enemy being killed. An F-111 aircraft is presumed lost on a ROLLING THUNDER strike mission in Route Package One.

Intercepted messages indicate that possibly coordinated attacks may take place in Darlac, Pleiku, Kontum, and Quang Nam Provinces beginning as early as today and continuing through Tuesday. Specific references to today as "N-Day" have been noted in messages concerning attacks on Ban Me Thuot and in eastern Pleiku Province.

SOUTH VIETNAM

1ST CORPS

Early yesterday an enemy force of 90-100 occupied a village on the Perfume River three miles north of Hue and effectively blocked traffic on the river. The village chief succeeded in evacuating all women and children and reported that enemy machine gunners had been chained to their guns. A US Army company met stiff resistance as it launched an attack on the village. After an additional company and a reconnaissance element reinforced, the village was surrounded and heavy air and artillery strikes pounded the village causing enemy fire to become sporadic as darkness fell. A river convoy which had been halted all day moved past the village without drawing fire and proceeded to Hue. The village will be swept at daylight. Two US were killed and 17 wounded during the day while 18 enemy were killed.

An ARVN two-battalion search-and-destroy operation which started on 26 March, six miles northeast of Phu Bai, continues with heavy enemy contact. South Vietnamese Navy junks and two coastal groups are supporting the friendly forces. Five ARVN have been wounded thus far in the action while 117 enemy have been killed, 40 detained, and 19 individual weapons seized.

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MILITARY CASUALTIES AND ENEMY WEAPONS
SEIZED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

28 MARCH 1968

	(1) 24 Hrs Ending 11 AM EST <u>27 MAR 68</u>	(2) Current Week 11 AM EST 23 MAR 68 Through 11 AM EST <u>26 MAR 68</u>	(3) Cumula- tive From <u>1 Jan 68</u>	(4) Cumula- tive From <u>1 Jan 67</u>	(5) Cumula- tive From <u>1 Jan 61</u>
UNITED STATES ^a					
Killed	24	156	4,579	13,744	20,601
Wounded Not Hosp	84	812	12,502	42,156	59,277
Wounded Hosp	91	879	13,408	45,779	66,396
Captured	0	0	33	168	264
Missing	0	12	174	445	821
SOUTH VIETNAM					
Killed	39	155	4,168	15,248	57,438
Wounded	154	656	14,013	43,461	128,803
Missing/Captured	0	1	1,518	3,858	28,862
OTHER ALLIED					
Killed	0	10	297	1,402	2,000
Wounded	0	13	365	2,983	4,753
Missing/Captured	0	0	4	7	24
VIET CONG/NVA					
Killed	406	2,393	72,414	160,495	319,648
Wounded (estimate ^b)	609	3,590	108,611	240,732	479,462
WEAPONS SEIZED					
Individual	84	510	14,380	42,802	- - - -
Crew Served	9	63	3,073	5,949	- - - -

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

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

c. The figures shown in column (1) and (2) are preliminary, unrefined battlefield-reported casualties received from COMUSMACV daily.

d. The figures in columns (3) through (5) are verified figures representing casualties reported during the period indicated.

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Reference to "N-Day" has been made by two probable artillery elements of the 304th Division near Khe Sanh. To the east near Dong Ha, artillery-associated elements have mentioned "N-Day" in relation to supply activity. A unit of the 90th Regiment near Hue has reported that it was at a position that would be "temporarily used to strike into Hue". No specific dates were given in the above intercepts. Further south, an intercepted message indicates that wide-scale fighting and continuous attacks on lines of communications and allied forces are to take place in eastern Quang Nam Province, at an unspecified but probably early date.

As many as 24 battalion-size military groups have now been noted moving south through North Vietnam's Military Regions 3 and 4 since early March under circumstances suggesting urgency. Definitive information on the function and destination of these groups is still lacking.

2ND CORPS

Evidence of further enemy attacks in the western highlands continues to accumulate. An agent report backed up by communications intelligence points to "large-scale mortar and rocket attacks before 1 April" in the Pleiku City area. A late intercept indicates that elements of the NVA 95B Regiment have been ordered to strike lines of communication east of the city "on 28 March, exactly on N-Day".

In Darlac Province, intercepts state that "N-Day" preparations call for coordinated artillery and infantry attacks on targets near and within the city of Ban Me Thuot today.

To the north, there are indications of impending attacks on allied positions in western Kontum Province. There is evidence that a newly infiltrated NVA regiment is among the enemy units maneuvering west of Dak To.

3RD CORPS

Two US Army companies, part of Operation RESOLVED TO WIN, were taken under fire by the enemy as they landed by helicopter 23 miles southeast of Tay Ninh on 25 March. The ensuing action continued until early morning 27 March when the enemy broke contact leaving 100 killed, one detained, and 15 individual weapons seized. The detainee reported that he was a member of a 400-man company and that half of the company was killed during the early fighting.

A US Army helicopter on a combat assault mission was shot down by enemy ground fire 31 miles northeast of Tay Ninh on 27 March. Three US personnel were killed and two wounded, while the helicopter was destroyed.

An intercept reveals plans for "uninterrupted artillery fire" on an undisclosed target in Binh Duong Province northwest of Saigon "on the night of N-Day". The message text strongly suggests that the target date in this instance is Saturday or Sunday.

A captured document reveals enemy failures in the Tet offensive against the Saigon-Cholon area. Special units were to assassinate high-ranking personnel in Saigon, including Ambassador Bunker, but failed because they lacked experience, had poor equipment, and allied countermeasures proved effective. Also, government installations were not attacked and occupied, because two local force battalions arrived late.

4TH CORPS

An ARVN Ranger battalion reestablished contact with the Soc Trang VC Local Force Battalion on 26 March. An additional ARVN battalion was committed to the engagement and heavy contact continued until early morning 27 March when the enemy disengaged, leaving 15 killed, 12 individual and one crew-served weapons. Eight ARVN were killed in this action and 61 wounded.

The Viet Cong may be experiencing morale and recruiting problems as ARVN forces apparently improve and as President Thieu's support of General Thang continues to create local enthusiasm. In his latest move, Thieu has appointed four new province chiefs, bringing to seven the number who have been replaced since Thang became 4th Corps commander and initiated his programs of offensive military action and elimination of corruption.

ARC LIGHT OPERATIONS: Twenty-four B-52 sorties struck troop concentrations, gun positions, and fortified areas within two to eight miles of the Khe Sanh combat base in South Vietnam and just across the border in Laos. Another 30 sorties were flown against infiltration routes, moving vehicles, truck parks, gun positions, and supply/storage areas in and near the A Shau Valley, southwest of Hue. Six additional sorties struck a base area of the NVA 1st Division located in the Pleiku area.

NORTH VIETNAM

ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS: Weather continued to hamper air operations over North Vietnam. There were 136 sorties flown, two of which were executed on the following ALFA targets: an A-6A struck the Ha Dong Army Barracks Southwest, nine miles southwest of Hanoi, and another A-6A hit the Cat Bi Airfield, five miles east-southeast of Haiphong. Four F-4 aircraft successfully radar bombed Phuc Yen Airfield, 13 miles north of Hanoi; however results were not observed due to adverse weather. All remaining ALFA scheduled strikes were cancelled.

Two F-111 sorties were flown against enemy truck parks in Route Package One but damage assessment was precluded by poor weather and low visibility. Results of an additionally scheduled F-111 sortie have not been received.

An F-111, flying from Takhli in Thailand on a strike scheduled against a target just northwest of Dong Hoi in North Vietnam, is missing and is presumed lost. The last-known position of the aircraft was over Laos, 69 miles east of Nakhon Phanom, Thailand at 4:45 PM EST on 27 March. A search effort is being conducted.

LAOS

BARREL ROLL AND STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS: US tactical aircraft flew 206 sorties against enemy targets in Laos; 140 of these were executed in the sector adjacent to Khe Sanh. Pilots reported destroying 25 trucks.

LATE ITEM -- SOUTH VIETNAM

1ST CORPS

The Khe Sanh base received 87 enemy-fired artillery (50), mortar (27), and rocket (10) rounds yesterday. One marine was killed and four were wounded as a result of these attacks. Thirteen hundred and seventy rounds of supporting artillery fire were expended by US forces. Twelve enemy were killed in the Khe Sanh area by air observer directed tactical air strikes.

3RD CORPS

ARVN reconnaissance has revealed a new road under construction east of Song Be in Phuoc Long Province. When completed, it will greatly increase the enemy's capability to resupply his units in the central area of 3 Corps.

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