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31 March 1968

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DAILY JOINT STAFF OPS - INT SUMMARY



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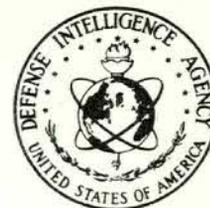
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OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS



SOUTHEAST ASIA

SUMMARY: In two heavy engagements near the Demilitarized Zone in Quang Tri Province, US and South Vietnamese units killed 247 enemy. Two bridges on Highway 1 between Hue and Da Nang were partially destroyed by enemy satchel charges. Elsewhere in South Vietnam ground activity was light and scattered as enemy forces continue to avoid decisive engagements. Another enemy arms cache was captured in the Mekong Delta region.

Although there are scattered small-scale enemy movements, Allied operations apparently have disrupted the enemy's preparations for offensive action. Major troop activity is evident only in Kontum Province.

SOUTH VIETNAM

1ST CORPS

A reinforced US Marine company, conducting a combat patrol south of the Khe Sanh Combat Base, located an enemy unit in a well-fortified bunker complex. The Marines launched an attack against the position, but despite extremely heavy fire from attacking Marines and a large volume of supporting artillery fire, the enemy held their positions. After a 2-hour fight in which 115 enemy were killed, the Marines were forced to end the attack and returned to the Khe Sanh Combat Base. US Marine casualties were placed at nine killed and 71 wounded.

On 29 March a South Vietnamese Army battalion engaged an enemy force five miles north of Dong Ha. Yesterday a US Army battalion and a US Marine battalion joined the attack on the enemy position which was taken after heavy fighting. The enemy lost 132 killed and three prisoners were taken. Friendly casualties were 20 killed (15 ARVN, 4 USA and 1 USMC), 80 wounded (75 ARVN and 5 USA), and 7 missing (6 USA and 1 USMC).

Yesterday afternoon enemy forces attacked two bridge sites on Highway 1 located 21 and 23 miles southeast of Hue. Both bridges were overrun and partially destroyed by satchel charges. Friendly casualties were 21 killed (14 USMC and 7 ARVN) and 32 wounded (30 USMC and 2 ARVN). The enemy lost nine killed. It is estimated that the bridges will be repaired by 3 April.

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MILITARY CASUALTIES AND ENEMY WEAPONS
SEIZED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

31 MARCH 1968

	(1) 24 Hrs Ending 11 AM EST 30 MAR 68	(2) Current Week 11 AM EST 23 MAR 68 Through 11 AM EST 29 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 ^a					
Killed	22	310	4,733	13,898	20,755
Wounded Not Hosp	101	1,712	13,402	43,056	60,177
Wounded Hosp	109	1,852	14,381	46,752	67,369
Captured	0	0	33	168	264
Missing	11	5	167	438	814
SOUTH VIETNAM					
Killed	26	354	4,367	15,447	57,637
Wounded	141	1,217	14,574	44,022	129,364
Missing/Captured	0	2	1,519	3,859	28,863
OTHER ALLIED					
Killed	16	14	301	1,406	2,004
Wounded	2	16	368	2,986	4,756
Missing/Captured	0	0	4	7	24
VIET CONG/NVA					
Killed	479	3,759	73,780	161,861	321,014
Wounded (estimate ^b)	719	5,640	110,661	242,782	481,512
WEAPONS SEIZED					
Individual	127	968	14,838	43,260	- - - -
Crew Served	16	102	3,112	5,988	- - - -

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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Enemy activity appears to center around preparations for offensive action; however numerous messages mention the problem of a shortage of food and military supplies.

2ND CORPS

Communications intelligence indicates extensive logistic activity in western Kontum Province. Some of the tactical maneuvering within the province probably is to avoid contact with Allied elements. However, unconfirmed sources state that Kontum City and Phan Thiet will be attacked during the night of 31 March.

3RD CORPS

Contact was light and sporadic throughout the Corps area. US units are in contact with an enemy unit five miles southeast of Saigon in an action which began late in the day. When darkness fell the US units moved into defensive positions and planned to continue offensive operations against the enemy at first light. US casualties during yesterday's action were two killed and 10 wounded while enemy losses are unknown. In a number of small-unit actions US units killed 35 enemy while losing two men wounded. South Vietnamese Army units reported 24 enemy were killed and six suspected Viet Cong were detained in a number of small-unit encounters. South Vietnamese losses were nine killed and 21 wounded.

The enemy apparently is attempting to avoid contact with US units. One message stated that rocket attacks should be launched on three unspecified targets only if they could be made without reaction from Allied forces.

Unconfirmed reports indicate President Thieu has dismissed the Bien Hoa and Gia Dinh Province Chiefs. No official reason was given, but a lack of security reportedly enabled the Viet Cong to mass troops in these provinces before the Tet offensive.

4TH CORPS

The Can Tho Airfield was hit by approximately 15 rounds of 75-mm recoilless rifle fire yesterday morning. Two men were wounded and 6 helicopters sustained light damage. The airfield remains operational.

South Vietnamese Army units captured an enemy arms cache 15 miles west of My Tho. The cache contained 8 mortars, 1 recoilless rifle, 4 machineguns and 12 submachineguns along with a large amount of small arms ammunition, mortar rounds, bangalore torpedoes, mines, and tear gas grenades. This is the fifth large enemy arms cache seized in the Mekong Delta region in the past three days.

ARC LIGHT OPERATIONS: Sixty B-52 sorties were flown yesterday. Thirty-nine aircraft bombed troop concentrations, artillery positions, and fortifications near Khe Sanh. Eighteen additional sorties hit troop concentrations, gun positions, and bunker complexes in the Hue area and three aircraft bombed infiltration routes northwest of Pleiku.

NORTH VIETNAM

ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS: US tactical aircraft flew 167 sorties over North Vietnam yesterday. Because of poor weather conditions over most of North Vietnam, 120 of the sorties were directed against targets in the southern panhandle region. Four ALFA targets were struck using airborne radar release techniques: four aircraft struck the Chuc Son Army Barracks, 10 miles southwest of Hanoi; one aircraft bombed the Hanoi Port facility two miles south-southeast of Hanoi; one aircraft bombed the Hanoi Radio Communication Receiver Station 11 miles south-southeast of Hanoi; and one aircraft hit the Cat Bi Airfield, five miles east-southeast of Haiphong. The results of the strikes could not be determined because of poor weather conditions and darkness. All other strikes scheduled against ALFA targets were cancelled because of poor weather conditions. Yesterday morning an F-111 aircraft flying from Takhli, Thailand on a ROLLING THUNDER mission, experienced flight control difficulties en route to the target and crashed 70 miles south-southwest of Nakhon Phanom. Both crew members have been recovered and are in good condition.

LAOS

BARREL ROLL AND STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS: US tactical aircraft flew 143 armed reconnaissance sorties over Laos yesterday with 99 of the sorties directed against enemy targets in the sector adjacent to Khe Sanh. Pilots reported the destruction of 37 trucks.

LATE ITEM -- SOUTH VIETNAM1ST CORPS

Enemy shelling of Khe Sanh increased yesterday with a total of 347 rounds of mortar, artillery, and rocket fire impacting on the Marine positions. US Marine casualties were six killed and 12 wounded. Tactical aircraft flew 284 sorties in support of Khe Sanh. Pilots reported 10 secondary explosions, 11 secondary fires, four trucks destroyed, and 29 enemy bunkers destroyed.

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