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FILE

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

20 February 1968

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PRESIDENTIAL OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEF



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PRESIDENTIAL OPERATIONAL/INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

SOUTH VIETNAM

1ST CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

OPS
During the period 8:00 PM EST, 17 February to 4:20 AM EST, 19 February, 250 rounds of mixed mortar and artillery fire fell on US Marine positions at Khe Sanh, Camp Carroll, Con Thien, and Gio Linh. Five US were killed and 27 were wounded as a result of these attacks.

OPS
At 1:20 AM EST yesterday, 3 miles north of Con Thien, an air observer directed artillery fire on 10-15 enemy in the demilitarized zone. Thirteen enemy were killed; there were no friendly casualties.

OPS
At 11:19 PM EST on 19 February, a US Air Force F-4C was downed by ground fire 45 miles west of Hue while on a ground support mission. The pilots were recovered with minor injuries.

OPS
On 17 February, a US Army company ambushed an enemy squad 7 miles east of Quang Tri resulting in 8 enemy killed. The following day in the same area another US Army company found 3 graves containing 110 bodies dressed in green uniforms. Civilians in the area reported that these bodies resulted from actions in the vicinity on 3 and 4 February.

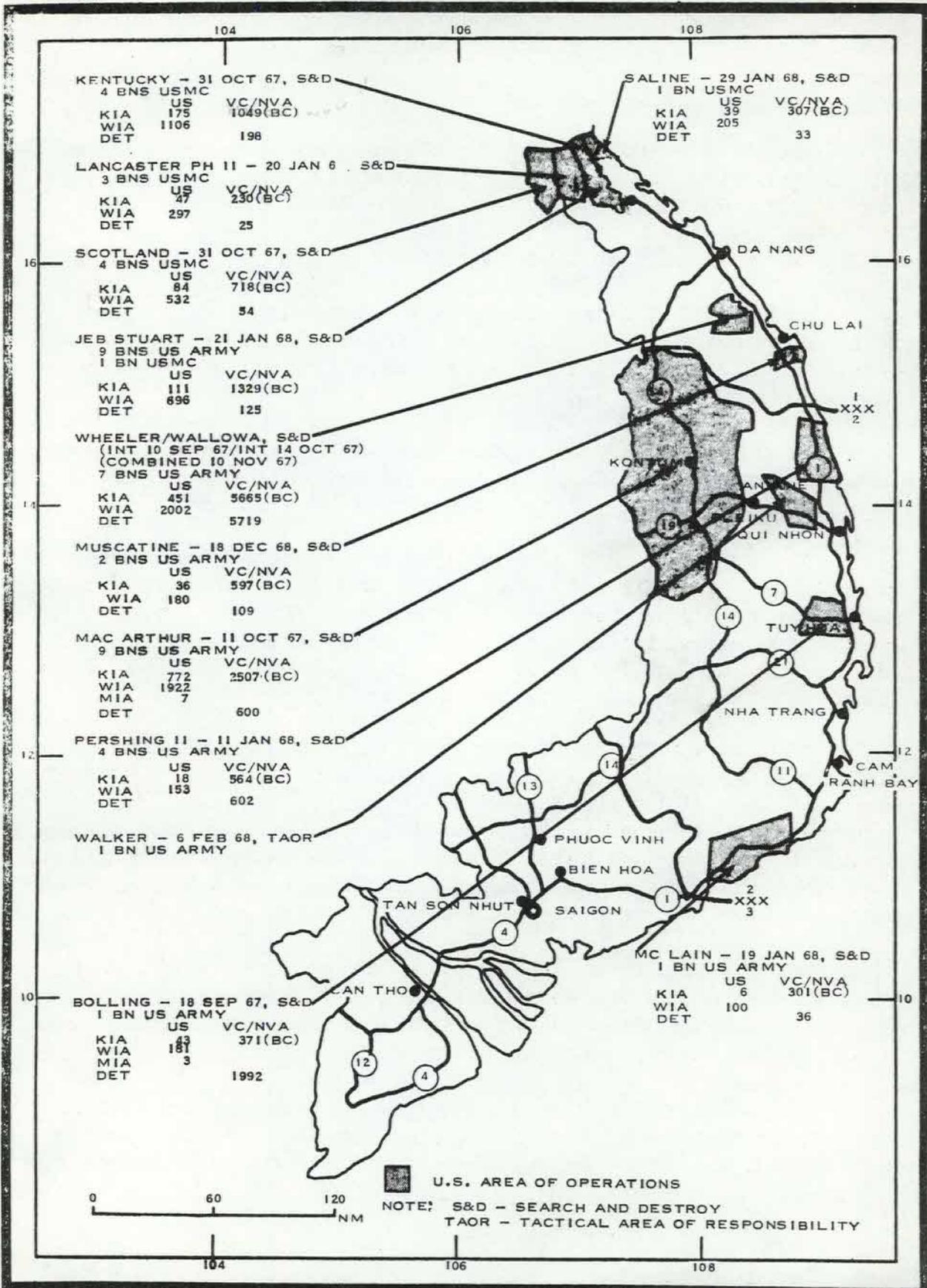
OPS
At 5:00 AM EST on 17 February, all US Marine units in the Citadel in Hue came under heavy contact from the direct front and left flank along the Palace wall. Marine units conducted artillery missions as well as organic weapons with contact continuing for three hours. Twelve marines were killed, 70 wounded (55 evacuated). Twenty-five enemy were killed, 14 individual and one crew-served weapons were seized.

OPS
At 5:00 PM EST on 18 February, the marines engaged groups of two and three enemy infiltrating across the wall into the Citadel. As a result of this action eight enemy were killed. There were no marine casualties.

Antium
As of 2:00 AM EST on 20 February, there was no significant change in the military situation at Hue. Press reports stating that the enemy is pulling out of the Citadel cannot be confirmed.

**SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM
WHICH INVOLVE PARTICIPATION BY US FORCES
(1ST & 2D CORPS)**

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SECRET

2D CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

On 18 February, 5 miles south of Phan Rang, a Regional Force platoon engaged an estimated enemy company. A flareship and an AC-47 aircraft supported and an ARVN reaction force was committed. The enemy broke contact leaving four killed and one crew-served weapon. Ten Regional Force were killed and two individual weapons were lost.

Also on 18 February, the hamlet of Lam Hoc, 37 miles east-northeast of Phan Thiet, defended by a Regional Force company, was attacked by two Viet Cong companies. Tactical air, artillery, and aerial rocket artillery supported the defenders. The enemy broke contact after 90 minutes, leaving 57 dead and 8 individual weapons. One person was detained. Friendly losses were 1 Regional Force killed and 4 wounded.

An update of the enemy attack on Phan Thiet indicates that at 2:15 PM EST on 18 February, a fuel storage area on the east side of the city was hit by 3 or 4 82-mm mortar rounds. Fires were started, but they were brought under control in 3 hours. Approximately 40,000 gallons of fuel was destroyed. At 10:10 PM on 19 February, the hospital was retaken by friendly forces.

Enemy units in Phan Thiet City continue to hold out in the northwest part of the city and appears to be well dug in.

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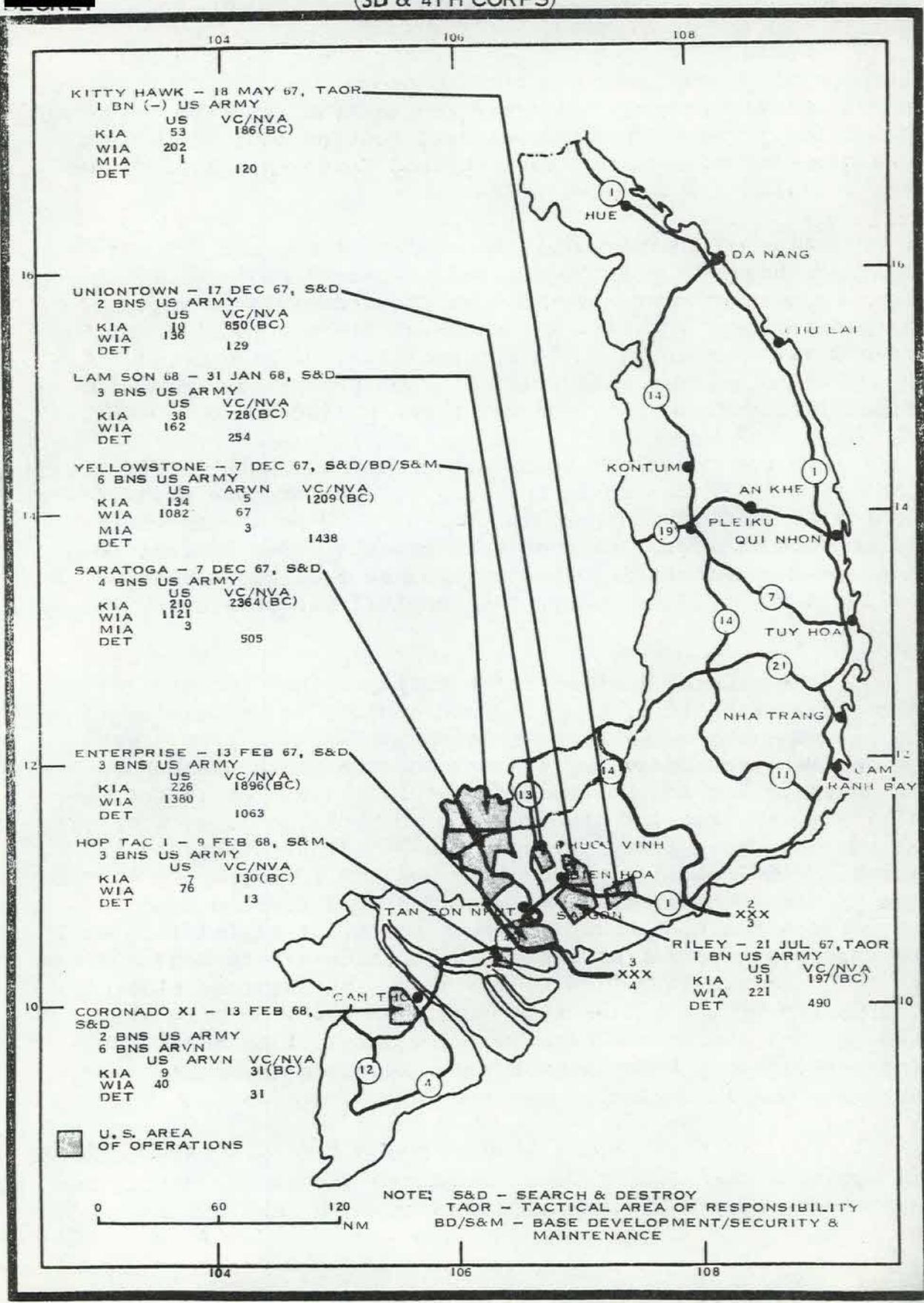
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Two district chiefs in Ninh Thuan Province have received information that 2 or 3 Viet Cong-North Vietnamese battalions are maneuvering to launch an attack on Phan Rang Air Base and

Imbun
Debs?
Daws?
Daws?

**SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM
WHICH INVOLVE PARTICIPATION BY US FORCES
(3D & 4TH CORPS)**



Phan Rang City. Phan Rang is one of the few urban areas not attacked in the first-phase Tet offensive.

3D CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

On 19 February, at 5:15 AM EST, elements of two US battalions and one ARVN Ranger battalion engaged an estimated enemy company during sweep operations 74 miles north-northeast of Saigon. One US and 4 ARVN were killed and 1 US and 26 ARVN were wounded; 20 enemy were killed.

The enemy still controls portions of Song Be, 60 miles north-northwest of Saigon. According to information received from 7 enemy prisoners who were captured in the early phase of the 17 February attack on the city, the Communists intend to make a determined effort to gain complete control of Phuoc Long Province. The province chief believes that the Liberation Front wants to occupy 1 South Vietnamese province along the Cambodian border from where it could either establish a coalition government or have a position of strength to enter into negotiations. The prisoners said the attack on Song Be would last for 7 days, unless the town fell sooner.

At 9:25 PM EST on 18 February the village of Tan Thoi Nhut, 6 miles northwest of Saigon was reported to have been occupied by 2 enemy companies.

Elements of an ARVN Ranger battalion were attacked by an unknown-size enemy force 3 miles southwest of Saigon on 18 February. The attack was repulsed, and 3 hours later the Ranger unit began a sweep of the area. Five ARVN were killed and 15 wounded; 12 enemy were killed. Fourteen weapons, 10 B-40 rocket rounds, 10 rifle grenades and 1,500 rounds of small-arms ammunition were seized.

Several unconfirmed reports and rumors indicate further attacks against Saigon. One series of reports indicate: (1) the Viet Cong will attempt to cut the highway between Saigon and the US base at Bien Hoa so as to limit US reinforcement; (2) the Viet Cong plan to seize the main South Vietnamese military hospital at Cong Hoa and use the building as a headquarters for a general attack on Saigon; and (3) the Viet Cong have distributed leaflets in Saigon advising that certain areas be evacuated because of impending attacks.

Moreover, unevaluated South Vietnamese military estimate indicates that the second phase Viet Cong general offensive is 20 February 1968

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MILITARY CASUALTIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

20 FEBRUARY 1968

	(1) 24 Hrs Ending 11 AM EST <u>19 Feb 68</u>	(2) Current Week 11 AM EST 17 Feb 68 Through 11 AM EST <u>18 Feb 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	52	91	2,308	11,473	18,330
Wounded Not Hosp	156	66	7,097	36,751	53,872
Wounded Hosp	168	72	5,747	38,118	58,735
Captured	0	0	0	135	231
Missing	5	27	391	662	1,038
SOUTH VIETNAM					
Killed	143	33	2,707	13,587	55,882
Wounded	188	183	8,341	37,789	123,031
Missing/Captured	3	8	980	3,320	28,324
OTHER ALLIED					
Killed	3	7	233	1,338	1,936
Wounded	4	16	482	2,800	4,530
Missing/Captured	0	0	2	5	22
VIET CONG/NVA					
Killed	892	1,345	42,307	130,388	289,541
Wounded (estimate ^b)	1,338	2,018	63,461	195,582	434,312

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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scheduled for 20 February, and that for an unknown period of time, the Viet Cong have infiltrated about 2,000 troops daily into the outlying districts of Saigon. In addition, the Viet Cong have been wearing ARVN uniforms in order to pass through checkpoints; their mission is to take Tan Son Nhut Air Base at any cost.

Finally, Lt General Khang, III Corps Commander, said on 18 February that he considers a second-wave Viet Cong attack on Saigon involving a large commitment of ground troops as unlikely, according to a usually reliable source. Khang thinks the enemy will rather rely on mortar and rocket firings, try to isolate the city by interdiction, and use political warfare, particularly among the refugees.

4TH CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

An update of the enemy attack on Vinh Long City indicates that the city has been returned to friendly control with only light contact reported. Results as of 19 February are: 6 ARVN killed and 74 wounded; 85 enemy killed, 45 detained, and 43 individual and 5 crew-served weapons seized.

Can Tho sustained 20 rounds of recoilless rifle fire at 2:00 PM EST on 19 February. There was also small-arms fire in the vicinity of the ferry site. Results were one civilian wounded. The 4th Corps tactical operations communication center sustained minor damage.

On 19 February, the Tra Vinh airstrip 37 miles east-southeast of Can Tho sustained a mortar, small-arms, and automatic weapons attack at 10:25 AM EST. Artillery and AC-47 aircraft supported the defenders. The attack lasted for 90 minutes. A fuel dump was set afire and an unknown amount of ammunition exploded after a direct hit. The airstrip is closed except to rotary wing aircraft.

On 17 February, Regional Force and Popular Force units on a reaction operation 27 miles south of Can Tho engaged an unknown-number of enemy. The enemy broke contact after 6 hours leaving 32 dead. Five friendly were wounded and one US and four friendly are missing.

ARC LIGHT OPERATIONS

Why not?

Thirty-five US Air Force B-52s dropped 1,015 tons of high explosives on enemy troop concentrations, fortified

positions, and supply areas around the Khe Sanh area on 18 and 19 February.

OPJ
An additional 21 US Air Force B-52s struck enemy troop concentrations, base camps, and support elements 35 miles northeast of Kontum, 30 miles northeast of Saigon, and 50 miles northeast of Pleiku, on 19 February.

DEPLOYMENT OF US FORCES

OPJ
The deployment status (airlift) of the 3d Brigade, 82d Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, North Carolina to Chu Lai as of 1:00 AM EST 20 February; 63.1 percent of troops and 47.1 percent of cargo have departed. Planned closure date is 10:35 PM EST 24 February.

OPJ
The deployment status (airlift) of 2d and 3d Battalions, 27th Marines from El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, California to Da Nang as of 1:00 AM EST 20 February; 90.2 percent of troops and 36.4 percent of cargo have departed. The planned closure date is 7:50 AM EST 23 February.

OPJ
The 1st Battalion 27th Marines with a strength of 1,995 men is en route to Da Nang from Kaneohe, Hawaii in 6 ships. The scheduled arrival at Da Nang is from 11:00 AM EST 22 February to 7:00 PM EST 28 February. The 6-day arrival period is caused by variance of individual ship speed capability.

NORTH VIETNAM

ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS

OPJ
All scheduled ALFA strikes for 19 February were canceled due to weather.

OPJ
Ninety sorties were flown yesterday by the following US tactical aircraft: 36 Air Force, 34 Navy, and 20 Marine Corps. Adverse weather again limited the number of sorties flown.

OPJ
Four US Air Force F-105 aircraft struck the Yen Bai Airfield 79 miles northwest of Hanoi. Adverse weather precluded damage assessment. The majority of tactical strikes against North Vietnam were conducted in Route Package 1 against enemy lines of communication and logistics in order to hinder enemy buildup in the vicinity of the demilitarized zone.

09)
Yesterday, 13 airborne surface-to-air missiles were observed by US pilots, during a 3 minute period, between 17 and 32 miles north to northwest of Hanoi. No US aircraft were damaged by SAMs.

LAOS

STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS

On 19 February, 251 sorties were flown resulting in 15 trucks and 1 tank destroyed. One hundred fifty-nine of these sorties were flown in Laos adjacent to Khe Sanh.

Non Responsive

auth

auth

LATE ITEM

~~05:45 AM EST~~

SOUTH VIETNAM

1ST CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

011) Enemy tube and rocket fired munitions, in 1st Corps, during the 24-hour period which ended at 8:00 PM EST on 19 February (9:00 AM SVN time 20 February) rose to a total of 576 rounds, with partial distribution as follows:

Khe Sanh Combat Base	60 mixed rounds
Camp Carroll	104 mixed rounds
Dong Ha Combat Base	72 artillery
C-2 Base	33 mixed rounds
Con Thien	56 mixed rounds
A-3 Base	20 mixed rounds
Gio Linh	9 artillery
Cua Viet	<u>92</u> artillery

TOTAL 446

012) Ground activity was limited to small-unit contacts. Three observed friendly fire missions accounted for 18 enemy killed. The first 20 rounds, received at Dong Ha, fell outside of the camp perimeter in a civilian village killing one and injuring 31. Friendly casualty figures resulting from these attacks for northern 1st Corps during the period were: six killed and 58 wounded while known enemy casualties were 18 killed.

013) Five 10,000 gallon fuel tanks were set on fire at Cua Viet. Marines at Con Thien fired six rounds of 105-mm COFRAM on 15 enemy in the open, killing 13. Thirty more COFRAM rounds were fired in five other missions with unknown results.

014) US tactical aircraft flew 306 sorties in support of Khe Sanh as follows: 166 Air Force, 70 Navy, and 70 Marine Corps.

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