

DMZ Flareup Mars Viet Lull

SAIGON, South Vietnam — (AP)— U.S. and South Vietnamese forces, supported by tanks, artillery and planes, reported killing 234 North Vietnamese Thursday in the hardest fighting in nearly a month along South Vietnam's northern frontier.

Spokesmen said three South Vietnamese soldiers were killed and 15 government troops and 15 U.S. Marines wounded. Vastly superior allied firepower was considered responsible for the big difference in casualties.

The flareup along the northern edge of South Vietnam resulted from vigorous patrolling by the allied forces.

Elsewhere across the country, the lull in ground action continued, and there was no sign of the start of the major enemy offensive which American officers expect before mid-September.

An enemy artillery barrage of 250 rounds, fired from inside the demilitarized zone at a South Vietnamese armored patrol, was the prelude to the action Thursday.

The barrage destroyed one medium tank and an armored

personnel carrier, and damaged another tank and three more personnel carriers.

But the government troops moved out and found a main body of enemy troops several hours later north of the Gio Linh outpost and about one mile south of the DMZ, near the east coast.

To the west along the DMZ, U.S. Marines reported killing 69 North Vietnamese in three clashes, one three miles northeast of the U.S. artillery base at Camp Carroll and the other two Southeast of the Con Thien outpost, which is two miles below the DMZ.

Another unit of Marines near Con Thien spotted enemy troops setting up an ambush and called in air strikes to drive the enemy into a trap the Leathernecks set up. They reported killing 11 North Vietnamese and said there were no Marine casualties.

Several hours later in the same area, a Marine patrol spotted an enemy unit and called in reinforcements, tanks and helicopter gunships. The Leathernecks said that time 17 North Vietnamese were killed and two Marines were wounded.

Civil Casualties High In Viet River Fight

By GENE ROBERTS

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CAN THO, South Vietnam — An American river convoy, fighting back at Viet Cong ambushes last week, killed nearly five times more civilians than military reports from the scene indicated at the time.

Many of the 72 deaths came when the U.S. force fired at the enemy with flame throwers, according to a military investigation made public Friday.

The investigation also shows that the civilian casualties were especially high near one ambush scene because South Vietnamese troops saw gunfire from the river, thought they were being attacked, and joined with the Viet Cong in firing on the Americans.

"This incident took place at night and our guys did not know who was shooting at them," said one American officer. And they stepped up their firing. Unfortunately they shot up one of the friendliest and most secure towns.

—Cai Rang — in the Mekong Delta.

"Two earlier incidents that same day, by the same convoy, took place in Viet Cong-controlled areas."

In addition to the 72 civilian deaths, 204 civilians were wounded and more than 450 homes were damaged or destroyed.

Ten Americans were wounded and one boat damaged and beached. One South Vietnamese soldier was killed and 15 wounded. Enemy casualties—if any—could not be determined.

Initial reports from the military were announced one day after the Aug. 8 shooting incident. At that time the toll was placed 15 dead and more than 100 wounded.

Pigeon Law Change

MUNICH, Germany — (UPI)

—The Bavarian state chancellor said Thursday it had discarded an old Nazi Third Reich law that only "reliable persons" may keep carrier pigeons.

N. Viets Kill 14 Marines In 2 Attacks

By GEORGE ESPER

SAIGON — (AP) — Hurling bangalore torpedoes and other explosive charges, North Vietnamese troops attacked two U.S. Marine units in South Vietnam's northern provinces and killed or wounded nearly all of the Americans.

Fourteen Leathernecks were killed and 22 were wounded in the attacks Thursday and Friday. They occurred south of Da Nang within 35 miles of each other.

The U.S. Command said 19 of the enemy were killed.

In one attack before dawn Friday, North Vietnamese troops hit a combined action platoon of 15 to 20 Marines and 40 to 45 South Vietnamese militiamen in night defensive

positions around a small village about 60 miles south of Da Nang.

Two or three enemy soldiers penetrated the platoon's perimeter, throwing charges as they broke in, but they were quickly stopped. When the fight was over, U.S. headquarters said, 9 Marines, 3 South Vietnamese and 12 of the enemy had been killed, eight Marines were wounded and so were several militiamen.

Twenty-four hours earlier, a U.S. Marine reconnaissance team outnumbered 10 to 1 was overrun by North Vietnamese troops who killed five Marines and wounded the other 14.

Seven of the enemy were reported killed during the attack before dawn in jungled mountains 22 miles south of Da Nang.

An estimated 200 North Vietnamese attacked the post with assault rifles, submachine guns, satchel charges and bangalore torpedoes, and broke through the Marines' barbed wire perimeter.

ENEMY WITHDRAWS

Marine reinforcements arrived two hours after the initial attack, but the North Vietnamese had withdrawn, the U.S. Command said.

The recon team was part of an operation trying to blunt the attack expected in the next two months on Da Nang, South Vietnam's second largest city and the biggest military base north of the Saigon area.

Along with the Marine setback, units of the U.S. Army's 1st Air Cavalry Division reported killing 60 of the enemy in a series of engagements in the same general area. One American was reported wounded.

Over North Vietnam's panhandle, two U.S. Navy pilots from the carrier Bon Homme Richard downed a North Vietnamese MIG21 just below the 19th parallel Thursday.

MIG DESTROYED

Lt. George Hise said one of his missiles exploded just short of the silver-colored enemy plane but came close enough to damage it. The MIG pilot dropped down and headed for the 19th parallel, which U.S. combat pilots are forbidden to cross, but Lt. Norman McCoy reported he finished it off with a direct missile hit.

Pilots flew 105 missions over the panhandle of North Vietnam Thursday, again concentrating on supply lines. Pilots reported damaging or destroying 14 trucks and 14 railroad cars.

Pilots Freed By N. Viets Fly to Laos

VIENTIANE, Laos — (UPI)—

Three American pilots, released by North Vietnam to the custody of three American pacifists, arrived here Friday night aboard a plane of the International Control Commission.

The three are Capt. Joe V. Carpenter, 37, of Victorville, Calif.; Maj. Fred Thompson, 32, of Taylors, S. C., and Maj. James F. Low, 43, of Sausalito, Calif.

They flew in with Pacifists Stewart Meecham of Philadelphia, Mrs. Ann Scheer of Berkeley, Calif., and Vernon Grizzard of Boston, Mass.

Grizzard and Mrs. Scheer are associated with the National Mobilization Committee and Meecham works with the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization.

U.S. officials said they were prepared to assist the pilots to return to the United States from Vientiane by commercial air connections.

North Vietnam was highly critical of the United States in February when it freed three other U.S. prisoners because they were flown to United States by military aircraft.

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