

Battles Near Saigon

Tet OFFENSIVE - 68

REDS CAUGHT IN SWEEP



SAIGON (AP) — U.S. infantrymen sweeping around Saigon's outer defense lines killed 105 Viet Cong guerrillas in a four-hour fight Saturday night while Vietnamese paratroopers reported killing 107 enemy soldiers just four miles from the heart of the city.

Both battles were north of Saigon as Allied forces tried to trap and wipe out remaining elements of the 4,000 guerrillas who surged into the capital in a massive offensive 12 days ago.

The heaviest fighting around Saigon erupted as crack Vietnamese paratroopers battled through the streets and buildings of the suburb of Go Vap, two miles from Saigon's northern city limits.

A government spokesman said the guerrillas tried to hold an ammunition depot they had seized earlier. But the troopers recaptured it, killing 107 enemy soldiers and captured one. The spokesman said nine paratroopers were killed and two were seriously wounded.

Nine miles farther north, soldiers of the U.S. 25th Inf. Div. continued to flush guerrillas that were believed to be regrouping around the district town of Hoc Mon.

The infantrymen, working with armored columns, began a fresh battle at 3 p.m. and when the enemy broke contact

RESIDENTIAL BLOCK IN SAIGON'S CHO LON AREA LIES IN RUIN AFTER WEEK-LONG BATTLE WITH VIET CONG.

AP Radiophoto

Battles—

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left behind 105 slain comrades, the U.S. Command said.

The Communists weren't all running, however. They continued fighting from house to house in a 20-square-block area of Cholon, the Chinese section of Saigon, and also held tenaciously to residential and business blocks around the racetrack on the western edge of the capital.

Twelve miles north of Saigon, guerrilla gunners fired 20 rounds of 122-millimeter rockets into the Bien Hoa Air Base early Sunday, killing one American and wounding 20.

In the old imperial capital of Hue, 410 miles north of Saigon, U.S. Marines continued mopping up pockets of guerrillas in the new section of the city.

Across the Perfume River, Vietnamese troops still fought to recapture the walled citadel that once was the home and fortress of Vietnam's emperors.

There were no reports of any new ground fighting at Khe Sanh in Sunday's communiques. But Associated Press correspondent Lewis M. Simons reported from Marine headquarters at Da Nang that during the last 24 hours Communist gunners slammed 125 rounds of rockets and artillery in the Marine positions.

In the provincial capital of Tan An City, in the hard-hit Mekong Delta, 25 miles south of Saigon, a Viet Cong mortar and ground attack left 25 civilians dead and 200 wounded, the U.S. Command said.

U.S. troops from the 9th Inf. Div. and South Vietnamese forces repulsed the attack, headquarters said, killing 123 enemy and capturing 35 weapons.

U.S. losses were put at four dead and 11 wounded. South Vietnamese casualties were reported by government headquarters as 15 killed and 60 wounded.



LOTS OF WIND—Prop blast whips a field near Hoc Mon as members of the 2nd Bn, 27th Inf "Wolfhounds", launch a combat sweep during a recent 25th Inf Div operation.

(Photo By SP4 Joe Carey)