

A031

TUESDAY MORNING, 7 JANUARY 1975

FILE SUBJ.

DATE 1/75 SUB-07

P I INDO 1-7

BULLETIN

1ST DAY LD A017

BY ALAN DAWSON

SAIGON (UPI) -- A U.S. NAVY TASK FORCE LED BY THE WORLD'S LARGEST WARSHIP STEAMED TOWARD SOUTH VIETNAMESE WATERS TODAY AT A TIME OF SEVERE MILITARY SETBACKS FOR THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT, AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID.

MORE

UPI 01-07 03:37 AES

A032 INDO 1-7

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URGENT

1ST ADD 1ST LD INDO SAIGON A031 XXX GOVERNMENT.

THE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID THE 11-SHIP CONVOY, LED BY THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER ENTERPRISE, WOULD TAKE UP POSITIONS OFF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE COAST AT 8 A.M. WEDNESDAY (7 P.M. EST).

THE SOURCES SAID THERE DID NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY IMMINENT PLAN FOR U.S. WARPLANES TO FLY OVER INDOCHINA, BUT THEY REFUSED TO RULE OUT SUCH A POSSIBILITY.

THE DISCLOSURE CAME HOURS AFTER COMMUNIST FORCES DROVE DIEMARD GOVERNMENT DEFENDERS OUT OF PHUOC BINH, CAPTURING THE WAR-TORN PROVINCE CAPITAL AT THE END OF A FIVE-DAY SIEGE.

MORE

UPI 01-07 03:40 AES

A036

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INDO 1-7

2ND ADD 1ST LD INDO SAIGON A032 XXX SIEGE.

THE FALL OF PHUOC BINH LEFT VIET CONG AND NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN CONTROL OF ALL OF PHUOC LONG PROVINCE, THE ONLY SOUTH VIETNAMESE PROVINCE ENTIRELY IN COMMUNIST HANDS.

THE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID TWO GUIDED MISSILE CRUISERS, SIX DESTROYERS AND TWO DESTROYER ESCORTS WERE HEADING TOWARD SOUTH VIETNAMESE WATERS WITH THE NUCLEAR-POWERED ENTERPRISE.

THE ENTERPRISE AND THE NUCLEAR-POWERED GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER LONG BEACH LEFT THE PHILIPPINES THIS MORNING, BUT OFFICERS REFUSED TO SAY WHERE THE TWO SHIPS WERE HEADED.

"WE ARE GOING TO NEED LUCK ON THIS ONE," ONE ENTERPRISE OFFICER TOLD UPI CORRESPONDENT KATE WEBB AT SUBIC BAY, WHERE THE GIANT SHIP HAD LAID UP FOR THE CHRISTMAS VACATION.

U.S. SPOKESMEN IN SAIGON AND THE PHILIPPINES REFUSED TO DISCUSS THE MOVEMENTS OF THE ENTERPRISE OR ANY OTHER SHIP OF THE 7TH FLEET.

MORE

UPI 01-07 03:56 AES

A037

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INDO 1-7

3RD ADD 1ST LD INDO SAIGON A031 XXX FLEET.

THE ENTERPRISE CARRIES SWING-WING F14 TOMCAT WARPLANES, THE NEWEST IN THE NAVY'S ARSENAL. THEY ARE CAPABLE OF CARRYING EIGHT TONS OF WEAPONS AT 1,500 MILES AN HOUR.

U.S. SOURCES SAID THE TWO NUCLEAR-POWERED VESSELS ARE TO RENDEZVOUS WITH NINE OTHER WARSHIPS OFF THE COAST OF SOUTH VIETNAM BY WEDNESDAY MORNING.

IT WAS LEARNED THAT ANOTHER U.S. NAVY TASK FORCE IS ALSO OPERATING SOMEWHERE IN ASIAN WATERS, BUT ITS LOCATION COULD NOT BE LEARNED.

THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER CORAL SEA AND AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF ESCORT VESSELS WERE BELIEVED TO BE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AREA, BUT IT WAS NOT KNOWN HOW CLOSE THE TASK FORCE WAS TO VIETNAM.

THE LAST U.S. BOMBING RAID IN SOUTH VIETNAM OCCURRED JUST BEFORE THE JAN. 18, 1973, CEASE-FIRE, WHICH ENDED AMERICA'S DIRECT MILITARY INVOLVEMENT BUT FAILED TO HALT THE FIGHTING BETWEEN VIETNAMESE FORCES.

THE TASK FORCE SAILED TOWARD SOUTH VIETNAM AS COMMUNIST TROOPS GRABBED FULL, FINAL CONTROL OF PHUOC BINH, 66 MILES NORTH OF SAIGON.

THE COMMUNISTS FIRED POWERFUL 130MM ARTILLERY GUNS AT POINT-BLANK RANGE THIS MORNING TO SMASH THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMAND BUNKER IN THE PROVINCE CAPITAL.

PICKUP 3RD PGH: MILITARY SOURCES

UPI 01-07 04:05 AES

A043

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INDO 1-7

INSERT 1ST LD INDO SAIGON A031 AFTER 1ST PGH XXX SAID.

A PENTAGON SPOKESMAN IN WASHINGTON, ASKED ABOUT THE REPORT, SAID, "THERE'S JUST NOTHING TO THAT."

HE SAID THE ENTERPRISE WAS SCHEDULED TO SAIL FROM THE PHILIPPINES TODAY AND WAS NOT GOING TO VIETNAM WATERS.

PICKUP 2ND PGH: THE DIPLOMATIC

UPI 01-07 04:48 AES