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WEDNESDAY MORNING, 10 APRIL 1975

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VIET 4-10

URGENT

1ST DAY LD

BY ALAN DAWSON

SAIGON (UPI) -- COMMUNIST TANKS, ARTILLERY AND INFANTRY SWEEP DOWN HIGHWAY 1 TOWARD SAIGON TODAY, BATTLING GOVERNMENT FORCES WITHIN 25 MILES OF THE SOUTH-VIETNAMESE CAPITAL.

NORTH VIETNAMESE AND VIET CONG TROOPS ATTACKED GOVERNMENT TOWNS AND OUTPOSTS ALONG A 13-MILE STRETCH OF THE HIGHWAY IN WHAT MILITARY SOURCES SAID MAY BE THE START OF A MAJOR DRIVE AGAINST SAIGON.

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES FLED IN PANIC DOWN THE FRENCH-BUILT HIGHWAY TOWARD SAIGON, LINING THE ROAD FOR A DOZEN MILES IN AN ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE THE FIGHTING.

IN THE MAJOR BATTLE, THOUSANDS OF COMMUNISTS LAUNCHED HUMAN WAVE ASSAULTS AGAINST OUTMANNED DEFENDERS AT XUAN LOC, A PROVINCIAL CAPITAL ALONG THE HIGHWAY 38 MILES NORTHEAST OF SAIGON.

THE COMMUNISTS ALSO MASSED ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TRANG BOM, A DISTRICT CAPITAL 25 MILES NORTHEAST OF SAIGON, AND SHELLED GOVERNMENT FORCES WITHIN THE TOWN.

WAVES OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE WARPLANES BOMBARDED COMMUNIST POSITIONS AT TRANG BOM AND THICK COLUMNS OF BLACK SMOKE RISING FROM THE AREA COULD BE SEEN IN DOWNTOWN SAIGON.

GOVERNMENT OFFICERS SAID THE ADVANCING COMMUNIST TROOPS WERE PUSHING ARTILLERY PIECES DOWN ABANDONED RAILWAY TRACKS ALONG THE HIGHWAY, THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

MILITARY SOURCES SAID HUMAN WAVE ASSAULTS AGAINST XUAN LOC, A CITY OF 35,000, MAY SIGNAL THE START OF A MAJOR COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE CAPITAL.

PICKUP 4TH FGH: THE SOURCES

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