

Prepared to Defend Saigon

Allies Ready for Reds: Abrams

SAIGON (AP)—Gen. Creighton W. Abrams said Friday allied forces are "well prepared" for any Communist attack on Saigon.

The commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam said thousands of infantrymen backed by an armada of warplanes and gunboats are trying to stop a threatened major attack on the capital.

Declining to predict when the Communist command might launch its long anticipated third offensive, Abrams said:

"That's like betting on horse races. Almost any prediction I'd make could be wrong. It's pretty risky business. Really, I tell you, it doesn't make much difference to us. We're already well prepared and we're trying to see if we can't postpone it

BEARCAT, Vietnam (S&S)—The Vietnamese Presidential Unit Citation was presented to the men of the 9th Inf. Div. Friday during a ceremony celebrating the unit's 50th anniversary. Commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, and leaders of allied commands in Vietnam, watched as Lt. Gen. Le Nguyen Khanh, III Corps commander, placed the citation streamer on the division flag. Gen. Khanh also presented Maj. Gen. Julian J. Ewell with the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

(the attack.)"

Asked for how long, he replied, "Indefinitely."

Abrams talked briefly to newsmen at Bearcat, 20 miles northeast of Saigon, after taking part in a colorful ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the U.S. 9th Inf. Div.

Elements of the division, which has its headquarters at Bearcat, are protecting Saigon's southern flank.

Abrams was asked if he

brought the Communist command might change its strategy and, instead of attacking Saigon, strike at outlying provinces.

"I don't know," he said. "There are a lot of alternatives that are open to them."

Abrams conceded that despite the massive allied buildup the Viet Cong have been hard to find. When asked why, he replied:

"Because that's what he's doing. He's trying to make him-

self hard to find. He's devoting all his energy to it and there's lots of country out there."

Meanwhile, allied troops patrolling the fringes of Saigon turned up four more weapons caches in areas ranging from three to seven miles southwest of the capital.

In downtown Saigon, police captured two Viet Cong, seized two AK-47 assault rifles, seven Viet Cong flags and 10 pounds of leaflets during a house-to-house search.

Far to the north, 300 miles above Saigon, elements of the U.S. 11th Light Inf. Brigade found another Communist cache which contained four 120 mm mortars, 75 bicycles with weapons carriers and 26,000 rounds of small arms ammunition.

Pilots Not Freed as Expected

VIEN TIANE, Laos (AP)

—The three American pilots released by North Vietnam on Thursday did not arrive in Vientiane as expected Friday.

The pilots—Maj. James Frederick Low, 33, of Sausalito, Calif., or Marinland, Fla., who was shot down Dec. 16, 1967; Maj. Fred Neale Thompson, 32, of Taylors, N.C., or Big Springs, Tex., who was captured last March 20; and Capt. Joe Victor Carpenter, 37, of Victorville, Calif., who was captured Feb. 15 — were scheduled to arrive aboard an International Control Commission (ICC) plane Friday night.

The pilots were to have been escorted by three members of an American peace delegation who flew to Hanoi from Vientiane July 12 aboard the regular weekly plane of the ICC.

The French-piloted ICC plane is the only scheduled air service out of North Vietnam that does not pass through Communist China.

The failure of the pilots to arrive in Vientiane suggested that North Vietnam may fly the pilots to Europe, perhaps Paris.

The U.S. ambassador to Laos, William Sullivan, was at the airport Friday night to meet the plane.

But the French captain announced that neither the pilots nor the peace delegation were aboard. Sullivan left the airport.

Asks Hanoi To Accept Sick POWs

SAIGON (AP) — South Vietnam renewed an appeal Friday to Hanoi to accept 40 sick and wounded North Vietnamese prisoners of war the government says it wants to release.

Before the Communist Lunar New Year attacks last February, the government asked the International Red Cross to inform Hanoi that it was ready to hand over the prisoners. The government says it has not received a reply from Hanoi.

A communiqué from the Foreign Affairs Ministry said Friday that the government "denounced before international and domestic opinion the inhumanity of North Vietnam, which does not care about the men it sent to South Vietnam to carry out its aggression."

Apparently, to accept the prisoners would be an admission by North Vietnam that it has men fighting in the south.

ROK Drive Kills 56 Reds

SAIGON (S&S)—South Korean Marines Thursday finished a four-day operation north of Dien Ban in central South Vietnam and reported a total of 56 enemy soldiers killed. ROK casualties were reported light.

Troops of the 2nd Marine Brigade took part in the fighting in the sweep, dubbed Operation Dragon Palace-3.

Nine enemy were killed in scattered action along the central coast by Korean infantrymen. They also captured three individual weapons and seven anti-aircraft guns.



'Sick' Huey Gets a Lift

A U.S. Army Chinook carrier carries a "sick" Huey back to the repair hangars at Lai Khe, huey

camp of the 1st Inf. Div. It was not known what disabled the Huey. (S&S)

Take Hard Line in Talks With LBJ, Thieu Told

SAIGON (AP)—South Vietnamese House of Representatives has recommended that President Nguyen Van Thieu take a hard line in his talks with President Johnson at Honolulu on how to deal with the Communists.

The House recommendations, reported Friday by the official Vietnam press, urged Thieu to:

—Reject as unacceptable a coalition with the Communists.

—Impress on the American President that if the Paris peace talks proceed beyond the present preliminaries, that the South Vietnamese Government must play the key negotiating role for the allies. And that any agreement, including the complete cessation of bombing of the north must meet with Saigon government approval.

The legislative recommendations, which are not binding on Thieu, also urged the U.S. to suspend the Paris talks if the Communists renew their nuclear and rocket attacks against South Vietnam's cities or if they increase the tempo of infiltration of men and arms into the south.

He was charged, but not yet tried, "for action harmful to the anti-communist spirit of the people and the Army of Vietnam."

Thieu's son, Phillip, said his father had not urged talks with the Communists but rather with non-Communist elements of the NLF.

Ex-Candidate Moved To Prison in Saigon

SAIGON (AP)—Truong Dinh Dzu, the runner-up in the South Vietnamese presidential election last fall, has been moved to Saigon's Chi Hoa prison after being held for 10 weeks of questioning at National Police Headquarters, his family said Friday.

The 51-year-old lawyer, who ran second to President Nguyen Van Thieu, was arrested last

Friday.

Pacific Stars & Stripes

Sunday, July 21, 1968

Jets Ignite 171 Fires

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON — American fighter-bombers raked the southern Panhandle of North Vietnam Thursday while B-52s remained south of the Demilitarized Zone for the first time in four days.

The jet pilots reported starting 171 sustained fires and seven petroleum fires and causing 31 secondary explosions as they blasted storage areas and supply bases in 112 raids over the Panhandle.

In South Vietnam, the big Stratofortresses mounted eight strikes against enemy troop concentrations, infiltration routes and storage areas around Saigon and near Kontum City in the central highlands.

Air Force F4 Phantoms left 55 fires, lancing at a military storage complex nine miles southeast of Dong Nai. The crews were from the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing.

Navy A4 Skyhawks blasted two storage areas and engaged transfer points near Vinh, torching off 18 fires that sent black smoke rising to more than 1,500 feet at one of the sites. In the other, 20 fires were started by the jets' 500 and 750-pound bombs.

Casualties

WASHINGTON (S&S) — The Defense Department has announced the following casualties in connection with the conflict in Vietnam.

KILLED IN ACTION

Army
Cpl. Roy R. Kendricks, Ensigns, Ark.
Sgt. Hugh L. Herrington, Gentry, Ark.
Sgt. Frederick R. Whitt, Whitt, Coll.
Pfc. Charles Cook Jr., Son Francisco, Calif.
Pfc. Douglas Scates, Lillooet, B.C.
Sgt. Stephen L. Wright, Fortin, Ga.
Sgt. Stephen O. Holley, Fort Polk, La.
Sgt. Donald R. Holley, Fort Polk, La.
Cpl. Daniel L. Davies, Shreveport, La.
Sgt. Donald E. Bear, Anderson, Ohio.
Sgt. John R. Steele, Toledo, Ohio.

Navy
Hn. Leslie W. Royall III, Roseville, Calif.

Marine Corps
Cpl. John P. Delgado, Sonoma, Calif.
Cpl. Michael Thomas, Canoga Park, Calif.
Cpl. James A. Williams, Bishop, Calif.
Cpl. Harold L. Wulson, Marrow, Ga.
Cpl. John D. Dehner, Honolulu, Hawaii.
Cpl. James E. Johnson, Mobile, Ala.
Pvt. Leroy Gae, East St. Louis, Ill.
Cpl. Richard S. Brown, South Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Air Force

1st Lt. Leonard C. Williams, Gentry, Ark.
1st Lt. Raymond Bulewski, St. Louis, Mo.
Pvt. Leslie G. Healy, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
Sgt. Harley R. Roberts, Clinton, N.Y.
1st Lt. Henry A. Loffler, McLean, Va.
Lcpl. William A. Beckwith, Centralia, Wash.

WOUNDED IN ACTION

Marine Corps
Pvt. William J. Homan, Alameda, Calif.
Lcpl. William Morris Jr., Bradford, Pa.
Cpl. Lorrey L. Thornton, Spanish Fork, Utah.

MISSING IN ACTION

Army

Sgt. John M. Jimenez, San Antonio, Tex.
Sgt. Edward L. Henton, Lynchburg, Va.

MISSING IN ACTION

Marine Corps
Pvt. Patrick J. Scammon, Calif.

Pvt. Gary D. Templeton, Calif.

DIED NOT AS A RESULT OF HOSTILE ACTION

Army

Sgt. Louis J. Clinton, Collingswood, N.J.
Cpl. George Vester Dusen, Aransas Park, Calif.
Pvt. Gerald L. Johnson, San Jose, Calif.
Maj. Robert L. Miller, Richardson, Wash.

Navy

AO3 Dennis W. Allen, Millford, Ill.
Marine Corps
GySgt. Linwood P. Rickards, Beaufort, S.C.

CORRECTIONS

Cpl. Joseph C. Doyle, USA, Change

status from killed in action to died not as a result of hostile action.

Cpl. Claude D. Pratz, USA, Change

status from killed in action to died not as a result of hostile action.