

Mess DTO 5 MAY

1. General situation:

A With the exception of activity in the Kontum pass and vic of Poley Klong the relatively low level of activity continued in Kontum Province. There were several rather intense ABF's against Poley Klong throughout the day and Kontum city received several 122 mm rockets throughout the period. The rounds at Kontum appeared to be just harassment while the situation at Poley Klong seems far more serious. The defenders reported the ABF's as artillery fire and observed one such attack this afternoon and I believe they are correct. The heavy caliber rounds which were impacting were all well within the inner camp itself in a very tight pattern. The dust and smoke cloud from each round appeared to rise - 2-300' in the air. They were spaced 3-5 seconds apart and appeared to come in three or four round volleys which would indicate at least three tubes firing. I also observed some smaller bursts which were much more widely spaced which could have

been mortars or possibly B-40 Rounds. The Defenders were also reporting small arms fire impacting on the perimeter. Just to the North about 5 Km S on Route 511 we engaged 5 Enemy Tanks from about 1600 until Dark. A FAC, Covey 536 confirmed the target and then lost the tanks in the Trees. B/7/17 was moved from vicinity of Kontum city to relocate the targets while the Hawk Claw package was launched from Pleiku Holloway. Both arrived on station within five minutes of each other followed within 15 minutes by a continuous stream of F-4 Fighters. The attack continued until darkness set in with the FAC's staying on station to remain all night along with specter.

A. at 1500hrs Five NVA Trucks and 60 Troops were observed south of TAN CASH. Later when guns and TAC AIR arrived on station the movers could not be located. Reports of the clearing operation in Kontum Pass are confused and vague. Conflicting reports indicate ARVN has abandoned some positions on top of the rock pile. The air borne Bus closed

into Pleiku late 5 May. The status of QL-14 from Pleiku to Kontum is unclear but it is probably still closed. The 23d Div. conducted fairly extensive patrolling to and the N and NW of Kontum city. Although there were negative results this is an encouraging sign. The VNAF C-123 which had blocked the runway due to a flat tire on 4 May was finally removed by VNAF at 051300.

B. No significant activity was reported today from Binh Dinh Province. Mr. Varn and General Dzu visited there for several hours but there was no fall-out from the trip.

It was reported last night that over half of the troops who were evacuated from LZ English just faded away when they were unloaded at Qui Nhon. There were hopes that they would report in to their units by the end of the week.

2. Synopsis of Operations:

42/14/7

West 16/6/4

East 18/8/3

	Sorties	PAX	Tons	Hours
West	80	314	99	25

EAST

119

97

132

17hrs.

3. Air con operations:

A. B/7/17: VR missions were flown WSW and NE of Kontum city and one mission to locate tanks was flown north of Poley Hlung. No personnel were sighted, however, there were indications that old fighting positions had been used recently. Several new bunkers were found. AT 051400 an LOH was shot down by small arms fire at AR 809915 NE of Kontum city. The observer was wounded in the posterior and the aircraft was subsequently extracted. During the extraction, enemy fire was received and clearance to fire was given by SA, 53 Regt. The return fire resulted in a FFI with 3 ARVN KIA and 15 WIA VIC AR 815920.