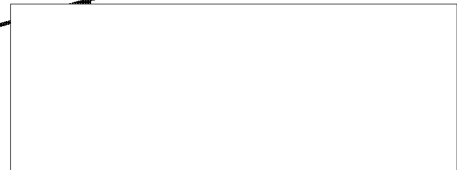


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*Vietnam:

North Vietnam: North Vietnam again put up a tough and aggressive air defense effort against US air strikes in the Hanoi and Haiphong areas over the weekend.

At least ten American aircraft were downed during strikes on 18 and 19 November. Intensive surface-to-air missile firings around Hanoi accounted for five of them.

North Vietnamese fighter aircraft continued to display aggressive combat tactics. Two MIG-21s engaged an incoming flight of 12 US planes on 18 November. The MIGs retreated across the border into Communist China after shooting down two US aircraft with air-to-air missiles. They did not land in China, however, but instead returned to North Vietnamese airfields.

Two US Navy aircraft were lost to MIGs north of Haiphong on 19 November. The same day two MIG-21s pursued a US photo-reconnaissance aircraft into Laos; they fired missiles, but failed to damage the US plane.

South Vietnam: Communist military activity around Dak To continued over the weekend and other Communist elements expanded their efforts to tie down allied forces throughout the highlands.

Several sharp clashes between allied and enemy troops were reported northeast of the US strongpoint at Dak To. This shifted the focus of action away from the area southwest of Dak To, where elements of at least three North Vietnamese regiments have recently engaged large American forces. These enemy units have suffered more than 800 killed since the Communist campaign around Dak To began early this month.

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Meanwhile, to the south, reconnaissance activities of the North Vietnamese 95B Regiment in northern Pleiku Province and battle preparations under way by other units, suggest that increased enemy activity may soon break out in the western highlands as far south as central Darlac Province. This strategy may be designed to spread out concentrations of American forces and enable the enemy to renew large-scale offensive efforts in the western highlands. [redacted]

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