

MEMORANDUM

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June 22, 1972

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER *Haig for*
SUBJECT: Situation in Vietnam

Activity increased in northern Military Region 1 as South Vietnamese Marines continued operations across the My Chanh River. The enemy launched heavy artillery attacks on Marine positions north of Hue followed by an armor supported ground assault west of Fire Support Base Nancy in southern Quang Tri Province. Only light combat was reported in Military Regions 2, 3 and 4.

-- In northern Military Region 1 enemy artillery attacks increased against Airborne and Marine elements north of Hue while South Vietnamese Marines continued offensive operations across the My Chanh River. Over 200 rounds of 130mm artillery hit Marines east of Fire Support Base Nancy while west of the base the enemy launched an armor supported ground attack. ARVN casualties reportedly are light and 15 enemy tanks have been destroyed.

-- In Military Region 2 the situation remains unchanged with only light combat activity reported. Clearing operations continue around Kontum City, while Rangers killed 52 enemy near Fire Support Base 41 south of Kontum.

-- In Military Region 3 combat continued at a low level throughout the area. An Airborne brigade has been extracted from An Loc and moved to Saigon for refitting. Only 19 artillery rounds hit An Loc but several light contacts were reported near the city and along Route 13.

-- In Military Region 4 activity is reported at a low level with only scattered contacts reported in Kien Tuong and Dinh Tuong Provinces.

In air operations, 665 strikes were flown by tactical US aircraft throughout Vietnam while 251 missions struck at targets in North Vietnam. There were twelve B-52 missions against areas north of the Demilitarized Zone. Targets included railroad bridges north of Hanoi and Haiphong with at least two spans reported down. South of Hanoi, 25 large secondary explosions and a sustained fire were observed at a transshipment point while 40 trucks were destroyed at a truck park. A direct hit was also reported on a POL area.

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Military Region 1

South Vietnamese Marines continued offensive operations across the My Chanh River. West of Fire Support Base Nancy heavy shelling and ground attacks are being reported.

-- South Vietnamese Marines continued offensive operations north of the My Chanh River, killing 70 enemy. Enemy attacks by fire increased last night, with over 200 rounds of 130mm fire striking Marine elements east of Fire Support Base Nancy.

-- West of Fire Support Base Nancy, ARVN Airborne units were attacked with a heavy artillery barrage followed by a ground and armor attack. Initial reporting indicates 15 enemy tanks have been destroyed (11 by TacAir) and 51 enemy killed. ARVN casualties were light.

-- Preparations for renewed enemy activity on the northern Hue front continued to be noted in enemy communications. Elements of the NVA 38th Artillery Regiment, apparently supporting NVA 304th Division units, discussed inducing ARVN defections from a position to be attacked, registration firing of artillery, & phasing of a new campaign possibly beginning today. Other intercepts and enemy deployments suggest increased activity is imminent in the west between Fire Support Base Nancy and Camp Evans.

-- Da Nang Airfield was hit by eight 122mm rockets, causing minimal damage and casualties. No U. S. soldiers were killed.

Military Region 2

In Military Region 2, the situation remains unchanged with only light combat activity reported.

-- Kontum City remains quiet with no combat activity reported in the area. Friendly units continued to expand their defensive perimeter north of the city as enemy units again avoided heavy contact.

-- South of Kontum City, at Fire Support Base 41, ARVN Rangers found the bodies of 100 enemy soldiers in an area that had been struck by tactical aircraft and artillery on June 19. In three contacts north of the base, along Route 14, the Rangers killed 52 enemy.

-- Enemy units in the Kontum Pass area are now on the defensive, and it appears that holding the pass is important in tying down and hindering friendly forces from regaining lost territory north of Kontum City.

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-- Scattered contacts in Binh Dinh Province accounted for 23 enemy killed. ARVN losses were three killed.

Military Region 3

Enemy initiated activity in the An Loc area continues to decrease, and combat throughout Military Region 3 was reported at a low level.

-- During the day friendly forces conducted patrols out of An Loc, with no significant contacts reported. An Loc received only 19 rounds of mixed mortar and artillery fire.

-- South of An Loc, sporadic contact was reported along Route 13. The Tan Khai Base Camp received a heavy artillery attack, but casualties were light.

-- A U. S. Army helicopter gunship on a ground support mission was downed by a SA-7 missile south of An Loc. The crew was recovered uninjured.

-- The Airborne Brigade (3 battalions) was airlifted from An Loc yesterday. All three battalions will be moved to the Saigon/Bien Hoa area for refitting.

-- Additional fresh troops are being moved into An Loc. The 43d Regiment headquarters and two battalions are being moved by helicopter just south of the city. Plans call for two additional battalions to be lifted in tomorrow. Regional Force replacements continue to arrive, while the evacuation of wounded continues.

-- Following B-52 strikes along Route 13, elements of the 46th Regiment will commence operations moving north along Route 13.

-- Two officers from the NVA 7th Division claim their unit suffered severely while interdicting Route 13. Some companies were reported down to a strength of ten men and the constant bombing was causing a major breakdown in morale and will to fight. Nevertheless, the enemy still holds sections of the road and gives no indication of abandoning them.

Military Region 4

Activity in the delta remained at a low level, with enemy-initiated incidents consisting primarily of light shelling attacks and harassments.

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-- In Kien Tuong Province enemy activity in the Elephant's Foot border area continued to be light as cross-border operations continue. Enemy losses were 50 killed, while friendly losses were 12 killed and 38 wounded.

-- In the southern delta, 43 enemy were killed in northern An Xuyen Province during two contacts. Enemy forces involved were possibly elements of the 95A NVA Regiment.

Laos

The North Vietnamese are continuing to offer determined resistance to government forces attempting to clear the Khong Sedone area in south Laos. Communist units again launched ground and artillery attacks against two irregular battalions trying to link up with government units already in the town. However, irregulars captured a bridge less than a mile north of the town, and their casualties were not significant. The two battalions in the town were shelled and probed, but held their positions.

Cambodia

No significant developments were reported.

US Air and Naval Operations

The following air strikes were flown on June 22:

	<u>MR-1</u>	<u>MR-2</u>	<u>MR-3</u>	<u>MR-4</u>	<u>NVN</u>	<u>Total</u>
TacAir US	215	79	88	32	251	665
TacAir VNAF	54	39	64	54	0	221
B-52	44	26	13	0	12	102*

* There were seven sorties flown in Cambodia.

U. S. aircraft hit two railroad bridges north of Hanoi (Huu Trung and Dong Vuong) and two railroad bridges north of Haiphong (Soui Co and Vu Chua). The Yen Lap Railroad bridge, 13 miles northeast of Haiphong, was hit by two Walleye missiles the center and west spans were reported down. At the Van Dong transshipment point, 22 miles north of Haiphong, 25 large secondary explosions and a sustained fire over 1/4 of the area was observed. Forty trucks were destroyed at the Xuan Mai Truck Park, 21 miles southwest of Hanoi; a direct hit on the POL area was also reported.

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Meanwhile, twelve B-52 sorties hit targets in North Vietnam just above the Demilitarized Zone.

Over South Vietnam, significant bomb damage from today's tactical air strikes includes three boats, three armored vehicles, two trucks and ten guns destroyed or damaged. Also, there were 40 secondary explosions and 12 secondary fires reported.

Updated bomb damage assessment from strikes flown over North Vietnam yesterday indicate that one span of the Long Lau Railroad bridge, 25 miles north of Hanoi, was destroyed. [] surface-to-air missile equipment were destroyed and four secondary explosions were reported at the Co Gian Assembly Area, 50 miles east of Hanoi. Three rail cars were destroyed and one track was cut at the Phu Ly transshipment point, 48 miles east of Hanoi; four buildings were destroyed and one secondary fire was observed at the Nam Dinh Petroleum Storage site. Also armed reconnaissance missions destroyed one bridge, six trucks, nine surface-to-air missiles, one radar van and five rail cars. 25X1

An F-4 on a strike mission 25 miles north of Hanoi was hit by two air-to-air missiles. The status of the two crew-members is unknown, but search and rescue efforts are in progress.

Since the commencement of the North Vietnamese offensive on March 30, aerial engagements have accounted for the loss of 34 MIG aircraft. Additionally, four MIG aircraft have been destroyed on the ground and three MIGs have been lost due to missiles fired by U. S. ships.

As the campaign against North Vietnam's transportation systems continues, the cumulative impact of operations against enemy ports, coastal shipping lanes, and rail lines is forcing a greater reliance on the use of trucks to haul supplies. Evidence of this increased reliance on cargo trucks has been noted in photographs, pilot reports, and enemy communications. To date, however, it is not believed that the use of trucks has been adequate to fully offset the denial of seaborne imports and the disruption of other transport modes for supply distribution.

Naval Gunfire

In naval gunfire operations, three destroyers conducted 11 harassment and interdiction missions in the vicinity of Hon La Island while keeping a Chinese merchant ship under surveillance. In four strikes, other task units shelled the Ngoc Tra pontoon bridge and assembly area 13 miles south of Thanh Hoa, the Trang Dung storage area and Chau Khe ammunition storage area 12 miles south of Thanh Hoa, the Hoi Thang boat yard three miles east of Ha Tinh,

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the Dan Hai transshipment point six miles east of Vinh, and the Ngoc Lam transshipment point 25 miles north of Vinh. Strike damage was not observed.

Soviet Naval Activity

One E-class submarine is believed to still be in the South China Sea, and two other E-class units remain east of Taiwan. The three surface combatants that departed the Macclesfield Bank Tuesday remain on a northeasterly course and should depart the South China Sea shortly enroute home to Vladivostok.

Merchant Shipping

There continues to be no evidence of any attempt to transit the minefields in North Vietnam since their activation. The number of foreign ships in North Vietnamese ports and anchorages remains at 31, with no additional diversions noted.

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Soviet-North Vietnamese Agreement on New Proposals

The UPI reported from Moscow that according to "qualified diplomatic sources" Soviet President Podgorny's recent visit to Hanoi resulted in a general agreement that a political, rather than a military, settlement must be sought, the Paris Talks must resume, and new constructive -- and more realistic -- peace proposals are to be submitted in Paris by both sides.

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North Vietnamese Negotiators Deny Ceasefire Possibility, Admit Setbacks

According to a French radio news broadcast, the Spokesman for the North Vietnamese Paris Delegation told newsmen June 21 that there is no possibility for a ceasefire in the near future which would be outside the framework of Madame Binh's Seven Point Proposal. The Spokesman also denied -- somewhat defensively -- that the offensive in the south is slackening.

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Military Region 2 Returning to Normalcy

A CORDS field report noted that Military Region 2 is beginning to return to normalcy. Market prices have stabilized throughout most of the region, and 60 percent of Pleiku's population has returned to that city. Military Region 2 residents also view the death of John Paul Vann as a serious loss. Many reportedly believed that Vann was responsible for the successful defense of Kontum.

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