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Tuesday, 18 January 1966

7:00 AM

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By uf NARA, Date 4-12-89

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

Communist guerrilla activity has intensified over wide areas of the country on the eve of the Tet cease-fire. A series of incidents near Saigon during the past two days has resulted in heavy civilian casualties.

The South Vietnamese Army Special Forces camp at Minh Thanh received mortar and small arms fire early yesterday, and an outpost north of the camp was probed. Elements of the Viet Cong attacking units, estimated to be five companies, were also reported on the nearby airstrip. Air strikes were called for, and a reaction force was dispatched to the area. So far, 14 defenders have been killed and 27 wounded.

Two South Vietnamese were killed and 21 wounded when a command post in Quang Ngai city received 20 to 25 rounds of mortar fire and light ground probing attack last night. Nine rounds of the mortar fire landed in an orphanage compound during the attack killing 3 adult civilians and wounding 5 children. A nearby observation post manned by a Regional Force company of about 100 personnel was overrun. Casualties for this action have not yet been determined.

In Thua Thien Province, northern South Vietnam, a special forces patrol base manned by 53 South Vietnamese and 2 US Special Forces, was attacked for ten hours yesterday. Thirty air sorties were flown in support of the camp. Four South Vietnamese were killed and 6 wounded. Viet Cong casualties are not known. In the same province, 11 Viet Cong were killed in a one-day combined US/South Vietnamese search and destroy operation.

An outpost 50 miles west of Saigon was overrun early yesterday. Seven hours later a South Vietnamese reaction force had reached the camp and reported 13 Vietnamese killed, 8 wounded and 7 missing. They also reported that 9 civilians had been killed and 5 wounded. A large number of South Vietnamese youths were captured by the Viet Cong.

Twenty one operations of battalion size or larger are in progress at the present time. US forces are participating in seven of these operations.

A combined operation involving 2 US Marine and 4 South Vietnamese battalions, which began on January 9 south of Danang, was terminated yesterday. Viet Cong casualties were 34 killed, 29 captured and 221 suspects detained. US casualties were 4 killed and 51 wounded.

Three battalions of the US 1st Infantry Division continue Operation Buckskin 20 miles northwest of Saigon. Casualties to date are 13 US killed and 95 wounded, 2 South Vietnamese killed, 11 wounded and 1 missing, and 48

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Viet Cong killed and 3 captured.

Spain

Four survivors of the B-52/KC-135 collision over Spain yesterday have been recovered and are reported to be in good condition. The bodies of the remaining 7 crew members of the 2 planes have been reported recovered. The nose and tail section of the B-52 have been identified as part of the wreckage on land. The fuselage section has not been located. One of the 4 thermonuclear weapons has been found intact near the crash scene and is under guard. The remaining 3 are still missing. A disaster control team is on the site. Three Hundred Air Force personnel are proceeding to the scene to assist in search operations.

White House Situation Room

Arthur M. Coffey  
Briefing Officer

2 wpns have spread debris  
around with some contamination.

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