

VIETNAMESE SLAY 300 REDS IN CLASH

U. S. Forces Fly Troops to Attack South of Saigon —Two Copters Downed

By United Press International.

SAIGON, Vietnam, Sunday, May 13—Waves of South Vietnamese troops flown into battle by United States helicopters killed 300 Communist guerrillas yesterday in a major attack, it was reported today. The Vietnamese troops suffered few casualties.

Two United States Army helicopters were shot down but were recovered. No Americans were injured. The downed craft were from the Fifty-seventh Helicopter Company.

Marine helicopters also participated in the action, which took place in Kien Phong Province about seventy-five miles southwest of Saigon.

Planes Find Guerrillas

Informed sources said Government Rangers, regular Army troops and Civil Guardsmen attached to the Vietnamese Seventh Infantry Division killed the 300 guerrillas in five separate clashes.

The fighting raged through areas covered by high reeds and flooded rice paddies in an operation designed to disorganize and wipe out guerrilla units.

Some of the guerrilla units were found by Vietnamese observation planes, the sources said. Attack units were dropped on the targets in waves of five to six helicopters each. The

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sources said a total of twenty-eight helicopters were used in the operation and that 2,000 Vietnamese troops took part. Some of the forces were used to cut off the guerrillas' line of retreat.

The attack force was said to have been made up from eight to ten Vietnamese companies.

After the initial attack, Government troops flushed the guerrillas from cover and the helicopters dropped a second wave of troops across the Communists' path of retreat.

The source said several guerrillas were killed by small-arms fire from helicopters while they attempted to flee across open ground.

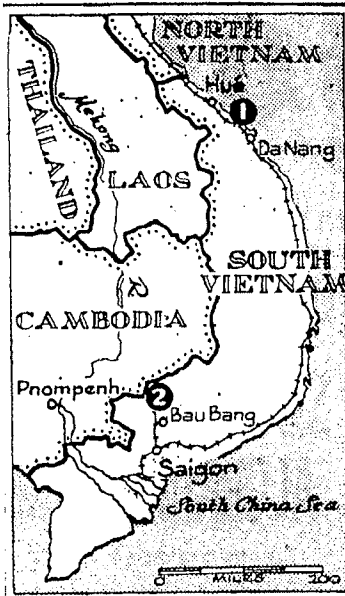
Vietnamese Air Force fighter-bombers called in by observation aircraft were reported to have inflicted heavy casualties on the guerrillas with flaming napalm bombs, rockets and heavy machine-gun fire.

A large number of guerrillas were said to have been killed when they ran into accurate fire from forces advancing across the Communist line of retreat.

As darkness fell yesterday, the sources said, pursuit of the badly disorganized guerrilla units was continuing.

The Marine helicopters that participated in the operation were from the 263d Helicopter Squadron based at Soctrang, 100 miles south of Saigon.

The Plain of Reeds, bordering on Vietnam's frontier with Cambodia, has been dominated by



The New York Times May 13, 1962
GUERRILLAS STRIKE:
Reds blew up a troop train north of DaNang (1) and threatened Bau Bang (2).

the guerrillas, known as the Vietcong, for several years.

Reds Blow Up Train

By HOMER BIGART

Special to The New York Times.

SAIGON, May 12—A small Communist force blew up a troop train Thursday in central Vietnam, causing heavy Vietnamese losses. Today, other guerrilla units were threatening a United States-sponsored resettlement project forty miles north of Saigon.

In the attack on the troop train, the guerrillas struck boldly at midday against the coastal railroad between DaNang and Hue and blew up a

bridge as the train was crossing it.

Three front coaches filled with Civil Guardsmen were derailed. The Communists then sprayed the wreckage with automatic fire.

Twenty-seven guardsmen were killed and thirty wounded. Six others are missing. There were no casualties among civilians who were riding in rear coaches.

The troop train was blown up ten miles north of DaNang, where an arm of the Annamite Mountains thrusts out into the sea. DaNang is the headquarters of Vietnamese Army Corps I and of a large supporting American military group.

Five hundred Vietnamese Communist guerrillas have been deployed in the area of the resettlement project, known as Operation Sunrise. Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara visited the area Wednesday.

Government artillery laid down harassing fire on a suspected guerilla concentration in a forest just east of Bau Bang, the northernmost of the three new villages of Operation Sunrise.

The Communists made their presence felt on the afternoon that Mr. McNamara inspected Ben Tuong, the first settlement of Operation Sunrise. They ambushed a convoy of the Seventh Regiment, killing

six soldiers. Five soldiers were captured.

This incident occurred at noon on the main road to Saigon. Mr. McNamara passed over this area about five hours later in a

United States Army helicopter. He was told nothing of the incident during an extensive briefing at Ben Tuong, although the settlement was only eight miles from the scene of the ambush.

The Vietnamese assured Mr. McNamara that the highway was now unmolested and that the whole area had a great degree of security.

Mr. McNamara was also told that there were only two Vietcong (Vietnamese Communist) companies in the area and that the enemy did not have sufficient strength to attack the settlements.

About 1,000 Vietnamese troops defend the settlements,

which are protected by unfinished earth walls, moats, foot-traps and barbed-wire defenses. Captured Vietcong documents indicated deep concern over the possible success of Operation Sunrise and a determination to sabotage that re-

settlement program.

The project, in which the American military here has put great faith, progressively isolates the rural population from