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dmz 1 (normass/deepe)

DONG HA, SOUTH VIETNAM, JUNE 9--The war along the demilitarized zone appears to be escalating dramatically--if not wildly.

Senior American commanders blame the North Vietnamese for the current round of escalation--and they are, in turn, using nearly all available means to hold the line against any potential Communist gains.

The military trends along the DMZ appear ~~contradictory to~~ American pleas at the Paris peace talks for the North Vietnamese to de-escalate the scale of their military activities in the South, especially along the ^{S. X} ~~mile-long~~ line at the 17th parallel that technically separates North and South Vietnam.

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dmz 2 (normass/deepe)

Senior American military commanders are not in agreement here whether the future battlefield actions will determine the bargaining points at Paris-- or whether the peace talks will even further influence the battlefield situation. Senior ground commanders believe the Communist escalation around the DMZ is designed to influence the peace talks. But senior commanders running the air war over North Vietnam are "apprehensive" that American negoti~~at~~ negotiators in Paris may agree to stop the bombing ~~abovamm~~ over ~~reduced~~ bombing all the bombing over North Vietnam, which they believe would jeopardize American ground troops just south of the DMZ.

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dmz 3 (normass/deepe)

One new, specific ~~x~~ fear voiced by these air-warriors: that Hanoi will publicly offer at Paris to release captured American fliers if Washington agrees to stopping the bombing "and other acts of war" above the DMZ. Although some of their personal friends ~~wer~~ are believed held in North Vietnamese prison camps, none of the Navy and Air Force pilots I ^{ED} talks with approved of stopping the air war over North Vietnam on those terms. But, they are worried ^{it} it would be a difficult proposal for the American government to justify rejecting to the American public and international world a opinion.

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dmz 4 (normass/deepe)

"The situation along the DMZ is pretty much of a conventional war battle-theatre," one high-placed source explained. "There is a frontline, but it is not as fluid as the frontlines in ~~the~~ Europe or the Pacific during World War II. It is more like World War I, in which both sides ^{made} ~~use~~ classical conventional use of maneuver elements and ~~use~~ artillery. But, the ~~enemy~~ North Vietnamese frontline is not fixed. It is a question of the Allies keeping them as fixed as possible. When the NVA move, the Allies fix ~~them~~ and destroy them; then they ~~wid~~ withdraw and the Allies re-fix them. The whole process starts again."

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dmz 5 (normass/deepe)

American field commanders bring up these specific points regarding the Communist escalation:

1. Increasingly sophisticated weaponry and logistical systems. American

More than ever before, American aircraft flying north or south of the DMZ are in jeopardy. ~~More than ten~~ surface-to-air missile sites, of which only one is known to be manned, are ~~positioned along the~~ just north of the DMZ in the eastern sector. These sites are simply the ground preparations for the placement of SAM's and associated equipment--the missiles, launchers and radar equipment are moved around between these sites. One SAM has been ~~seen to explode of~~ ^{by American pilots} Dong Ha, the headquarters of the Third Marine Division ¹⁴ miles south of the ~~DMZ~~. ^{Bon Ho River} It had been fired at a Marine aircraft flying a reconnass reconnaissance ~~mills~~ mission north of the DMZ. At least one SMA SAM has been officially announced as fired at a B-52 mil mission nor along the DMZ. American pilots flying transports into Marine post positions south of the DMZ are becoming worried about the 100 mm. radar-controlled anti-aircraft weapons the Communists are known to have poised on their side of the DMZ. DMZ. Special flight patterns have been worked out so that American aircraft are not "locked in caught and "locked in" by the Communist radar. On the ground, American commanders are voice amazement at the fine equipment of the individual North Vietnamese soldier, this plus the increased luxury of his supporting weapons. These commanders believe the NVA is attempting to supplement his high-highly-mobile rocket artillery with standard field artillery pieces.

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dmz 5 (normass/deepe)

~~American field commanders bring up these specific points regarding the~~

~~Communist operation:~~

1.2 On ground ~~troops~~ ^{infiltration.} North Vietnamese troops are pouring into South Vietnam—easily replacing their increasingly high rate of battlefield losses. "We know the infiltration is increasing," one high-placed source explained, "but we don't know where it stops—if it stops along the DMZ, or in the central highlands or where. We suspect they are spreading their troops around as they try to maintain military pressure in all areas...in order to back their hand in Paris. But The DMZ is the cloes c piece of real estate closest to North Vietnam, which makes it easier to reinforce, resupply and move in heavy artillery." The relative balance of Allied-Communist main-unit forces along the DMZ is considered to remain essentially the same as during February, during the Tet offensive, but both sides reinforced heavily just prior to that, informed sources report. No specific statistics regarding the level increased level of infiltration were available here.

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dmz 9 (normass/deepe)

3.

~~in terms of~~ ground tactics,

the ~~the~~ North Vietnamese units

SOLDIERS HAND

PITCHED,

near the DMZ have begun waging setpiece battles with American Marines and

counterattacking in broad daylight. The most extreme example of this and lasted five days, ~~example~~ was the battle of Dai Do, which began on April 29, 12 miles south

of the DMZ and just ~~west~~ ^{SOUT} miles northwest of Dong Ha, ~~the U. S. Marine headquarters for their Third Division.~~

"There were several things out of character in that extremely sharp action," one Marine general explained. "The North Vietnamese ~~can't~~ consistently counterattacked—he counterattacked three times (twice in one day and once another day). The enemy showed tremendous determination and this becomes ~~appara~~ ^{appara} apparent in several other engagements also. The North ~~V~~ NVA is counterattacking to an extent it ~~it~~ has never done before."

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dmz 8 (normass/deepe)

K. L. Smith
(Hank: Thanks for your cable. Will airmail postmortem as soon as possible.

Regards Bev).