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operation 1 (normass/deepe)

BIEN HOA, SOUTH VIETNAM, APRIL 8¹⁰—The

largest military operation to date in the Vietnam war, launched early this week, ~~the~~ represents in massive form a modulation, but not a change in Allied strategy here.

This operation, along with the breaking of the siege of Khe Sanh ~~along~~ the demilitarized zone, indicates to reliable sources here, the Allies have regained ^{STRATEGIC} the momentum of the post-Tet war—a significant development as Vietnam ~~peace talks appear~~ "talks to begin talking" ~~appear appear under~~ about to begin.

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operation 2 (normass/deepe)

The massive military operation, setting a new tone if not a trend in the war, represents a de-conventionalization of Allied military power, as well as a new scope in coordinating and marshalling the greatest number of Allied troop resources in a single corps area.

Specifically, the operation is ~~minimum~~ significantly designed to:

1. to accelerate and coordinate the Allied strategic and tactical offensive in the 11 provinces around Saigon, which are the pivot points to the military defense of the capital. The operation, if militarily successful, would attempt to relieve the political-psychological state of near-depression in the ~~capit~~ Saigon in the wake of the Communist Tet offensive and more recently the looming, peace talks which raise spectres of uncertainty in the capital.

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operation 3 (normass/deepe)

THE CORPS HEADQUARTERS

AROUND 3-9-68
Authoritative sources here believe the Communists have suffered a shattering military defeat during and following the Communist Tet offensive and that the Allies have held the military initiative since then. In fact, these sources believe the Communists have suffered so heavily they can not launch a second wave of sensational attacks into Saigon, duplicating their Tet formula, without significant reinforcements from North Vietnam—the reinforcements they will be able to get faster within the reduction of bombing over American bombing over the North.

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operation 4 (normass/deepe)

2. to spray, rather than the concentrate, Allied maneuver battalions and paramilitary units in order to counter the Communists across the spectrum of their unit formations, from the squads in the hamlet, the platoons in many villages up to their main force battalions. The strategy here is still General William C. Westmoreland's search-and-destroy operation—but the target, instead of being predominantly against Communist main force units, ~~comprisi~~ comprises focusing on the whole array of the Communist military formation.

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operation 5 (normass/deepe)

3. Within the main force war, the Allied power is swinging in step with a double-trend in Communist strategy, first, to fragment their large units, from regiments into battalions and from battalions into separate companies, and second, to glue ~~the~~ this fragmented main force strength around the ~~vietnam~~ urban centers, instead of returning to their former jungled base areas along the border frontiers.

"We were surprised the Communists ordered their units to ~~break~~ break up and stay in a belt along the cities," one Allied source explained. "They have been taking a tremendous losses as we moved our troops and firepower against them. So, the Allies are now fragmenting to meet their fragmented units, and in doing so we can get cover more ground than before."

Later, the operation is expected to attempt blocking the five corridors of ~~supply~~ the ~~main force~~ Communists use in moving ~~their~~ their men and supplies into the outer Saigon perimeter.

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operation 6 (normass/deepe)

The military operation is named Toan Thang, a Vietnamese
lable meaning certai "~~frantranmidpamng~~, "Complete Victory." A
total or of 90 Allied maneuver battalions are committed to the batta
battle (American, Vietnamese), in addition to more than
50,000 Vietnamese paramilitary troopers called Regional and Popular
Forces. The area of operation involves all eleven provinces in the
tactical area called Three Corps by the Vietnamese command and Field
Force Two by the American command.

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operation 7 (normass/deepe)

The operation is under the direction of Vietnamese corps commander, General Le Nguyen Khang, and American Field Force commander, Lt. General Fred Weyand, who daily review ~~them~~ and orchestrate the their troop movements.

"There's very close Vietnamese and American coordination," one reliable source explained. "This isn't the first time, but it is the first time on such a continuing basis. There's a daily review by the two generals--where should they concentrate their troops, should the Americans and Vietnamese attack jointly, and if so where and how. And there's a continuing integration of intelligence."

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operation 8 (normass/deepe)

One reliable source explained:

"This operation doesn't look too sexy as far as the blue arrow boys are ~~concerned~~ concerned," concerned. There's not a massive blue arrow aimed at a blue goose-egg, where^d the enemy is concentrated. But, in terms of the fragmented enemy strength, we are moving everywhere--and we don't have to go too far to find them. Also, this operation gave our troops the sense of an offensive and was a means to get a handle on alot of scattered units. In this operation, we'll involve the Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces to a greater degree, plus Vietnamese National Police as well."

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operation 9 (normass/deepe)

Operation Toan Thong—Complete Victory—is an extension of the
~~56-battalion Que Quyet Ta Thang~~ (Thang—Resolved to Win—which had
 previously been the largest operation of the war. *the five provinces around Saigon.* Quyet Thang with
 56 battalions (³⁰ American, ²⁶ Vietnamese) ended last week with a

27-day scorecard total of ~~2,658~~ REPEAT 2,658

Communists Killed 298 Allied Killed
 (105 U.S., 193 Vietnamese); 1394 Allied
 Wounded (922 U.S., 472 Vietnamese),
 more than 500 Communist Suspects
 and prisoners were seized; 994
 weapons seized.

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operation 10 (normass/deepe)

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Quyet Thang was ~~the~~ named by General Khang and brought peals of criticism and derision from Radio Hanoi, since he stole the name of a Communist operation launched during the decisive battle of Dien Bien Phu fourteen years ago. The operation was also mildly criticized by some Western correspondents ~~because of~~ alleging it was more public relations gimmickry, than a traditional kind of military operation. However, ~~the~~ reliable sources at the corps headquarters here ignore their quibbles as irrelevant ~~to the~~ when considering the scope and changing strategy involved in the operation.

~~(Rank: I'll file three or four strategy type stories in the next several days, based n on some fabulous interviews on my weekend tfo trip. I might also try to weave them into a three or four-part series, but they could be run separately as well. Also, I think we need to do a more detailed and coherent Vietnamese reaction piece on peace overtures, including some of the effects in the provinces. Regards Bev).~~

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