

Report in Saigon: 3/10/65 More Marines Due

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SAIGON.

Up to 10,000 more American Marines are expected to be sent to South Viet Nam soon, reliable sources here said yesterday.

The augmented force's role would be the defense of major military installations and perhaps important cities, but the Marines' duties would place them under combat conditions, the sources noted.

A 3,500-man Marine contingent already has been assigned to Viet Nam for this

function, with more than half the force deployed around the big U. S. air base at Da Nang.

In Washington, officials denied last night that the United States at present intends to send additional large numbers of ground troops to South Viet Nam. A qualified source said the idea was not even being discussed because there has been no request to this effect from the South Vietnamese government.

The sources in Saigon also indicated that more ground forces are expected in the
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REPORT MORE MARINES FOR VIET

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coming months from other Free World nations, particularly from Asia but also possibly token forces from South America and Europe.

KOREA

In a related development, the command responsibility for prosecution of the anti-Communist war would be shifted from total Vietnamese control to that of a combined command including a number of Allied nations, the sources said.

They indicated that the multi-national command, in which American officers would play a major if not a leading role, would vaguely resemble the United Nations Command that operated during the Korean War—but without the UN. The sources said the combined command, still in formulative planning stages, would be established at least by June, if not sooner.

It was understood in Washington that the Saigon joint command proposals, coming mostly from the Vietnamese side, have been discussed for at least a year. American officials said formal implementation of the idea would be difficult and they were aware of no progress toward an agreement on the subject.

CHINA

The U. S. Marines arriving in the future, it was said, probably will have the responsibility of securing such major installations as the jet-length runways at Bien Hoa, only 20 miles from Saigon, where four Americans were killed and six U. S. jet bombers destroyed in a Communist Viet Cong mortar attack last Nov. 1.

The sources said the Philippines may send as many as 4,000 soldiers to Viet Nam at

a later date. Nationalist China is known to be willing to send ground units, but is currently awaiting an invitation from the South Vietnamese government. These forces probably would be used for building roads or providing logistical support, but they would operate in Communist-infested areas.

The Japanese constitution prohibits the sending of military forces, but Japan probably will increase civilian technical assistance, the sources said.

"Token" or "symbolic" military forces from some European and South American countries also is a current consideration, according to the sources.

It is also considered possible that Thailand may send military units to South Viet Nam or southern Laos.

Six hundred South Korean ground troops—the first contingent of an expected 2,000-man force—already have arrived in South Viet Nam. The South Koreans are engaged in non-combat activities such

as road and dispensary building, but, like the U. S. Marines, they are prepared to fight if attacked.

Yesterday, a squadron of U. S. Marine helicopters—generally 24 aircraft—began arriving to serve as the air arm of the Marine Brigade.

Official American sources refused to say at what distance the Marine ground units and the incoming helicopter squadron would operate around the Da Nang airbase for security. However, mili-

tary experts believe units responsible for the security of installations must operate at least beyond the range of mortars and 75-mm. recoilless rifle fire—more than two miles—which Viet Cong units are capable of lobbing onto air bases.

TALKS

The sources said the plan for more American ground security forces has been under consideration for a long time. But two current factors have necessitated its implementation:

First, in the view of American political analysts here, Communist North Viet Nam is not now considering negotiations that would be acceptable to Saigon and Washington and probably will not do so in the future.

Second, the military situation in the northern provinces of South Viet Nam has deteriorated sharply since the Feb. 7 bombing of North Viet Nam by American jet planes. A growing number of units of North Vietnamese-born personnel have infiltrated from North Viet Nam in past months and drastically increased the military pressure in provinces bordering southern Laos, where U. S. jet fighters also have been conducting air strikes.

LANDING

SAIGON (UPI).

The last of the 3,500 U. S. Marines sent into South Viet Nam were landing yesterday at Da Nang, on the South China Sea coast 350 miles northeast of here.

Army Gen. William C. Westmoreland, commander of U. S. forces in Viet Nam flew to Da Nang to confer with Brig. Gen. Frederick J. Karch, who is commanding the Marine force.

One Marine officer served as an adviser with Vietnamese forces yesterday in a Viet Cong attack 285 miles northeast of