

ZCZC SAG

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damage 1 (normass/deepe)

HUE, VIETNAM, March 2—Some compared the battle ruins of Hue to the photographs of Stalingrad, Warsaw and Berlin in World War II. [Some described sections of this once-imperial capital as "a Hollywood version of the Alamo."] Some said the spotty ~~destruction~~ damage to the turrets, ramparts, ^{moat} ~~moat~~-bridges ~~and~~ of the once palatial citadel fortress evoked an image of medieval warfare not witness by the world since the Dark Ages. And some American Marine veterans said ~~it~~ Hue was the worst city destruction they had seen in three major wars spanning a quarter of a century.

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damage 2 (normass/deepe)

"The damage to Seoul in the Korean War was less than and different from that of Hue," one veteran sergeant explained. "In Seoul, armies of both sides retreated or ~~ex~~ advanced through the city, but didn't fight within it ~~like~~ i like in Hue.

"Even the destruction to the cities of ~~//K~~ Okinawa during World War II were different—because they were smaller and more scattered," he said. "But, if you put all the cities of Okinawa together, the damage in World War II would look something like Hue today."

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damage 3 (normass/deepe)

The war ravage of Hue (pronounced whey), where the National Liberation Front flag flew ~~shockingly~~ in front of the citadel for twenty five days, represents the most concentrated pocket of urban destruction to date in the Vietnam war, making even the damage in Mekong Delta and central highland cities moderate by comparison.

The fury of the Hue battle and its resulting destruction—yet to be officially or statistically assessed—was staggering to behold. The local populace either fled the city or else holed up in refug makeshift refugee camps in schools, the ~~university~~ university complex, churches or the lo hop hospital. With people-less streets, the city took on an eerier day-time appearance of one vast cemetery. At night, when illumination ~~in~~ flares were popped for defensive lighting, the city took on an even more macabre, shadowy semblance of some weird science fiction world of charred homes, hit-and-run graves grave mou graves near cabbage patches, and bombed-out citadel turrets.

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damage 4 (normass/deepe)

The fight for Hue, lasting nearly a month, appeared to be a battle in which all the participants lost. In the short term, the city and people of Hue ~~probably~~ probably lost the most. The pivotal question in the future is which of the combattant power blocs—the Communists ~~or~~ the Allies—lost the most.

But, for the population, perhaps the key question was not who was right, but who was left.

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damage 5 (normass/deepe)

Preliminary, ~~official~~ official "guessimates" indicate a maximum of one thousand civilians lost their lives in the Hue battle-- but mass graves of important personalities and pro-government supporters assassinated by Communist squads are still being sought. Some of the Hue civilian wounded and refugees are now being trans-shipped to Danang for temporary relief and aid. Virtually every home, office, shop in the city, if not devastated by ~~the~~ heavy Communist and Allied weaponry, was subsequently ravaged by plundering, ~~and~~ looting, and vandalism. At the peak of the battle, the whole population of 113,000 was at one time or another classified as refugees and sought dole-outs of food from the Vietnamese army. may

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damage 6 (normass/deepe)

Perhaps more significant, the urbanites of Hue, who for years had ~~survived~~ ^{EVADED} the war in the villages around them, now lost the illusion they ~~would~~ ^{could have} escape without pain and bloodshed any longer. The bitterly-fought battle within their midst became a great class ^A equilizer. The bourgeoisie, government civil servants and Vietnamese army staff officers, who before had not only escaped the war but also made immense ~~corrupt~~ corruption profits from it, had now become one if of its victims.

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damage 9 (normass/deepe)

Somehow, Vietnam the nation also lost. Hue was the sentimental inner sanctum of Vietnamese nationalism to many intellectuals, who remembered the cultural, historical and social role of the former imperial ~~capital~~ capital--not ~~unlike~~ ^{ASS-3-04} unlike the role of Boston in the colonial days of America. Other Vietnamese may have held it with less regard.

"I'm sure if you asked the average ~~Viet~~ Vietnamese ~~if~~ ^{with the} the old citadel was important to them, they'd say yes," one American explained. "But, I'm not sure they have any more feeling for it ~~the~~ than I would if the Washington monument was destroyed."

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damage 10 (normass/deepe)

The Communists also lost ^{FIRST} ~~not only~~ the human bloodshed of nearly five thousand officially claimed as dead and material loss of more than 950 weapons. Along the walls of the citadel, near the former imperial palace, a half dozen graves covered ~~simply~~ with palm leaves in the midst of a lettuce garden rather simply typified the Communist ~~loss of their own~~ sacrifice of their own soldiery. And, along the muddy streets of Hue, an unadorned mound of dirt here and ^{corpses} there also signified their losses. Some of the Communist dead remained un-buried after three weeks of fighting--and were seen to be grotesquely nibbled on by chickens and pigs.

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damage 11 (normass/deepe)

More significant, the Communists' Robin Hood idealism preaching home-grown wars of liberation lost some of its meaning. The military spearhead of the Hue battle was carried by predominantly, if not totally, North Vietnamese units, who made no pretense to the population they had not invaded from across the ~~so-called~~ demilitarized zone.

At some of the Northern troops reportedly brought news of relatives from Hanoi and Haiphong to small groups of Vietnamese who fled the North, and their families, in 1954 ~~the~~ part when the country was partitioned.

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damage 12 (normass/deepe)

And, the Communists' utopian, pie-in-the-sky promises of ~~revolution~~ revolution were also ~~dissipated~~ dissipated during the the battle. Even when the Communists ruled sections of the city for days, many people fled them--and finally, their presence armed presence ~~bou~~ brought not utopia, but the self-destruction of the city.

The Vietnamese government and army lost also, and may well become the chief ~~vict~~ victims of the campaign in the long run. In bloodshed, the Vietnamese armed forces strength in the city of some 4,500 soldiers, Rangers, and Marines suffered "moderate" casualties casualties by official claims. REPORTS.

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damage 13 (normass/deepe)

More important, ~~perhaps perhaps~~, the Vietnamese army, despite individual acts of heroism, lost what it had sought to be for the past fifteen years—simply an army. Militarily, it had not secured the city—and in a few places, North Vietnamese units marched four abreast in company formation into the city, reliable sources report—and the ~~stambanbanan~~ government forces barely succeeded in securing its own division headquarters in the citadel.

Politically, the Vietnamese armed forces in Hue manifested ^{the} the most glaring, continuous contradiction of the war—it helped re-conquer the city and then proceeded to damage it further by ~~lootn~~ looting and plundering. Their armed forces had in effect nullified its prime political mission—to re-establish law and order—by simply adding to the anarchy and destruction.

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damage 14 (normass/deepe)

And, ^T the American Marines lost too. First, in bloodshed—129 killed and 1011 wounded, by official reports. But, behind the stat stark statistics lay the grim realization, that nearly half a Marine battalion 1000-man battalion was killed or wounded in the citadel—a battlefield of less than three square miles—were the heaviest fighting ensued. Like the North Vietnamese, the Marines used to rice paddy fighting—had never set foot in Hue before—and were They were surprised at the beauty of the city and the wealth of some upper and middle-class homes.

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damage ¹⁵ ~~14~~ (normass/deepe)

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One Marine, as Communist mortars exploded seventy five ~~meter~~ meters from him, surveyed the battle damage and said: "What a pity. It's such a pretty city. ⁷ I ~~It~~ didn't think such rich people lived in Vietnam."

Somehow, also, part of the great American dream for Vietnam was washed away in Hue. The American answer to ~~for~~ North Vietnamese foxholes dug into churches, pagodas and the ~~palace~~ palace wall, was conventionalized power—the 106 mm. "mules", the six-tube 106 mm. Ontos, a few well-placed airstrikes when cloud covers permitted, and bombardments on the Palace wall with eight-inch howitzer ~~projectiles~~ projectiles. The net impact was not simply to destroy ~~one enemy~~ ^{mangle} their enemy militarily, but also to ~~destroy~~ ^{Demolish} the social-economic fabric ~~and~~ cementing ~~the political institutions leading to democracy.~~

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damage 16 (normass/deepe)

And, while the Marines exemplified ~~tradi~~ ^{Asse. Army} traditional ~~militat~~ military discipline of ~~in attacking~~ ^{Army} withering carpets of Communist gunfire, and military restraint in using their heavy firepower, ~~theyk~~ they, like the ~~Vien~~ ^{Army} Vietnamese armed forces, suffered from the lack of ~~political discipline in in~~ ^{Army} and indoctrination which was unveiled by some of their looting and vandalism.

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damage 17 (normass/deepe)

The mood was perhaps best typified by one Marine enlisted man, who in the last days of the battle, ~~said~~ the Mr expressed the view the Marines, rather than the Vietnamese, should assault the former imperial palace.

"The Marines were the first to get to the south wall of the citadel," he argued. "They should get the credit by assaulting the old palace too."

He thought a moment and added: "Or maybe we'll get the ~~blame~~ blame."

With a note of melancholy, he concluded: Oh, well, there's no glory in this war for ~~an~~ anybody."

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damage 18 (normass/deepe)

(Hank: weather prevented my getting to Khe Sanh Friday, so I'll attempt to get there Saturday. In case I can not file Monday or Tuesday, perhaps this piece will tide you over. ~~Reag~~ Reag Regards ~~Seg~~ Seg Bev).

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pacify 1 (normass/deepe)

DANANG, SOUTH VIETNAM, MARCH 11--The crucial pacification program in the five embattled northernmost provinces has suffered a "disasterous defeat" during the Communist Tet offensive, reliable sources report.

The assessment, made in the five provinces known as "I Corps," in the wake of the Communist general offensive beginning January 30, indicates "the program has taken ^{up a tremendous} a helluva shellacking," the sources ~~said~~ said.

The I Corps region, where the heaviest semi-conventional fighting of the war is soon expected by the American command, includes the province of Quang Tri, where ~~a full~~ a reinforced ~~four-regiment~~ Marine Third Marine Division is stretched out holding the 26-mile long Demilitarized Zone. Further south lies Thua Thien province and its chief city of Hue, which the North Vietnamese ~~Vietnae~~ Vietnamese ~~p~~ forces held for more than three weeks during the offensive. The other three provinces are Quang Nam and its ~~autono~~ autonomous city of Danang, ^{containing} the corps headquarters for the American Marines and Vietnamese forces; Quang Tin and Quang Ngai provinces.

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