The Viet Cong call this the "one point, two front" tactic used in their strategy, which western strategists term it "feint".

**Casualties**

Although casualties do not constitute the most reliable measure by which to assess the success or failure of a military campaign, a comparison of losses suffered by both sides during the crucial months of February and March - the first month of the Viet Cong Tet offensive - may give an indication of the trend of the situation.

Following are figures of losses recorded by the Joint Staff of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces for the first month of the Viet Cong Winter-Spring Campaign (February-March). This period was marked by the unprecedented attacks on the United States during the lunar New Year. These figures also represent the second wave of assaults which began 17 February as well as various smaller actions recorded until the end of March.

### 1. Friendly Losses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Vietnamese Personnel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killed in Action</td>
<td>3,501</td>
<td>1,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wounded in Action</td>
<td>10,678</td>
<td>4,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing in Action</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>14,722</td>
<td>6,255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Allied Personnel (mostly U.S.)** |          |       |
| Killed in Action     | 2,832    | 1,292 |
| Wounded in Action    | 15,832   | 3,453 |
| Missing in Action    | 352      | 252   |
| **TOTAL**            | 19,016   | 4,997 |

| **Weapon Losses (GVN only)** |          |       |
| Crew-Served Weapons        | 106      | 78    |
| Individual Weapons         | 1,418    | 741   |
| **TOTAL**                  | 1,524    | 819   |

| **Aircraft Losses (inland)** |          |       |
| Completely Destroyed       | 63       | 60    |
| Heavily Damaged            | 154      | 60    |
| Slightly Damaged           | 99       | 116   |
| **TOTAL (2)**              | 316      | 236   |
2. Enemy Losses:

(a) NVA and VC Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killed (by body count)</td>
<td>41,181</td>
<td>17,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captured</td>
<td>7,391</td>
<td>2,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>48,572</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,262</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Weapon Losses

- Captured by RVN Troops:
  - Crew-Served Weapons .. 1,504 837
  - Individual Weapons    3,241 1,646
- Captured by Allied Troops:
  - Crew-Served Weapons .. 1,419 491
  - Individual Weapons    5,838 2,463
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>5,437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though the losses reported by both armies were considerable, the casualties suffered by the civilian population were dramatic. Although no accurate statistics are available there were approximately 14,300 killed, 24,000 wounded, 72,000 houses destroyed, and 627,000 persons made homeless.

Destruction was nation-wide but it differed greatly from one part of the country to another. In the northern provinces (I Corps), where an estimated 5,500 North Vietnamese attacked the former imperial capital of Hue and occupied its citadel for 26 days, an estimated 4,350 civilians were killed including 2000 citizens of Hue and another 4,500 were wounded in the conflagration. As two-thirds of Hue was totally destroyed, some 90,000 people out of a total population of 130,000 were made refugees in their home town. Trade and commerce

(1) Included here are aircraft of all types lost due to enemy mortar attacks, ground fire, or for technical reasons.
(2) Of the February toll, 68 aircraft were shot down, 32 lost for technical reasons, and 205 destroyed or damaged while on the ground. Of the March toll, 38 were shot down, 67 lost for technical reasons, 116 destroyed or damaged in the course of enemy mortar attacks, five in the course of ground assaults, and ten were lost for unknown reasons.
declined by at least 20 per cent.

In the highland and coastal provinces (II Corps), less des­
was reported than elsewhere. About 1,100 civilians were
id an estimated 4,000 wounded while the numbers of houses
ly destroyed or partially damaged were given as 12,000 and
respectively. The status of roads in this part of the country
no significant changes. Prior to and following Tet, large con­
needed an escort element for their security.

The impact of the Communist general offensive was much
ent in provinces surrounding Saigon (III Corps). Here the
controlled up to 82 per cent of the population before Tet
et Cong only about five per cent. Except for Saigon there
88 civilians dead, about one thousand wounded, and 10,000
stroyed in all of III Corps. In the area of Saigon, however,
6,300 civilians killed, 11,000 wounded and a total of 19,000
stroyed, creating over 206,000 refugees.

In the Mekong Delta (IV Corps) some 1,300 dead and
ed were listed among the civilian population. Prior to Tet,
seen only 14,000 refugees in all of IV Corps but this was to
170,000 after the Communist attack. Immediately fol­
attacks communication on land experienced some difficul­
portation on rivers and canals continued to be quite satis­
tages of rice were reported only in very exceptional cases.

In closing, it can be said that eleven towns and cities suf­
damage. They were Kontum, Pleiku, Ban Me Thuot,
Tre, Vinh Long, Chau Doc, Can Tho, Saigon, Hue and
The May Offensive

The second phase of the Communist Winter-Spring Campaign, which journalists were to call "the May Offensive", was launched 5 May 1968.

Following their failure to achieve anything of lasting effect in the first days of the Tet attacks, the Communists launched a second wave of attacks on 17 February with the apparent aim of emulating their comrades in Hue who were still maintaining a hold on the former imperial capital. The assaults were aimed mainly at Saigon but enemy troops were stopped at the gates of the capital. Also on 5 March the insurgents shelled many South Vietnamese cities but this last attempt aroused only minor interest. From 5 March until the beginning of the second phase of the offensive, enemy activities followed their usual pattern and intensity.

The South Vietnamese administration reacted most cautiously taking additional precautionary measures for the defense of potential target areas, especially Saigon. Immediately after the first wave of attacks a curfew was placed in effect throughout the territory. As early as 28 February, Prime Minister Nguyen Van Loc signed a decree stopping the demobilization of all conscripts and recalling all reserve elements.

Beginning in March all male teaching staffs between the ages of 18 and 45 were ordered to go through some military training. They were to be followed by university students and senior high school pupils. The youths were also organized into units ready to take part in the defense of their home towns.

In many provincial capitals self-defense groups were formed upon the initiative of the local authorities. These were to be later incorporated into a nation-wide movement called the People's Self-Defense Force (PSDF). At the same time political parties and organizations also showed a renewed interest in organizing themselves into an effective anti-Communist instrument. The National Salvation Front (NSF) was created and it soon elected a steering committee under the chairmanship of Senator Tran Van Don. While President Nguyen Van Thieu was considering the advisability of ordering general mobilization and drafting all men between the ages of 18 and 40, the 600,000 strong Armed Forces were put on a state of full alert. Troops were also ordered to strengthen their defensive position.
The most pressing task was to assist war victims. President, in an address to the nation on 2 February, started a month-raising campaign to which each government employee and contributed one-thirtieth of his monthly pay. The central committee was made the responsibility of Vice President Cao Ky.

These measures, as well as what the common people had during the battles in the cities, resulted in a most encouraging situation. From a peaceful situation in which people had been not enough to believe the country was safe, life in the cities added to intense and sudden dangers. Awareness of the real and seeing the fighting spirit of government soldiers made more confident in the possibility of defeating the enemy.

The new psychological reality was most evidently reflected of the young generation in response to callup orders. It was a matter of public knowledge that Vietnamese youths nothing more than being drafted into the Army. Following the attacks on the cities, thousands of draft-aged boys did not even individual callup papers. Tens of thousands joined the Army.

Within one month following the Communist attacks the Army not only had enough replacements for its depleted also found most of its manpower problems solved, as if by lost units became overstrength after years of being under- In addition to former servicemen and new recruits, who joined in the fight, quite a few delinquent servicemen for petty crimes were given the chance to redeem them- they should volunteer for combat duties. Many of them did.

Another encouraging sign was the equipping of all combat the new M.16 rifles. With this new standard weapon, South troops not only attained much better individual firepower also to acquire a new fighting spirit that had been lacking
New peace path

Against this background of renewed confidence U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered a partial bombing halt over North Vietnam as a first gesture of goodwill to entice the Hanoi leaders to come to the conference table. The decision was made public on 31 March 1968 and was universally hailed as a courageous move.

America, however, understood that the Vietnam conflict could only be brought to an honorable end with Allied troops keeping up pressure against the enemy while its diplomats tried to reason with Hanoi. On 1 April a big sweep was launched to break the Communist noose around Khe-Sanh with the participation of the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

Airmobile troops immediately occupied some of the hills dominating National Route 9 while other Allied infantrymen, supported by armored elements, pushed in the direction of Khe Sanh. The 20,000-man column did not meet with much Communist resistance and it reached the besieged outpost on 5 April, ending a 76-day siege.

The following day Washington officially entered into contact with Hanoi and two days later received a reply from the North Vietnamese regime. Both sides publicly claimed willingness to take part in a peace conference but the matter of a site for the talks was to delay its opening for a month. Hanoi suggested Poland or Cambodia while Washington proposed Ceylon, Japan, Pakistan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Italy, Belgium, Finland or Australia.

The war continued pretty much along the same pattern in Vietnam. In the early days of April a Viet Cong Colonel, by the name of Tam Ha, rallied to the Government. He told his interrogators that the Communists were preparing for the Second Phase of the general offensive which again had the capital as its main target.

In the words of Tam Ha: "About ten thousand Viet-Cong troops are preparing for an attack on Saigon on 22 April but may postpone it to a later date. The attacking force consists of two regiments of the CT. 9 Division, two regiments of the CT. 5 Division and another two regional regiments the 165th and the Dong-Nai Regiments. For the attack on the capital CT. 9 elements will open a front to the northwest of Saigon with the main effort concentrated on Tan Son Nhat Airport. Elements of the CT. 5 Division will attack from the west and south. All important targets have been selected including military installations, power..."
The conflict kept up on with communist valour.

Army units in Saigon immediately were put in state of 100 alertness. While additional precautionary measures were taken, the Capital Military District, U.S. airmobile troops were led to the Ashau Valley which was known to contain an important North Vietnamese Army (NVA). In this operation over 200 were deployed on 28 April. Right after this, a South Vietnamese airborne task force was dispatched to join in the battle. Although resistance was weak, their anti-aircraft fire was so very hot that 30 of the helicopters were downed. This, however, was adequately compensated by the weapons and ammunition held by the sweeping troops.

U.S. diplomats continued to meet with their North Vietnamese counterparts in Laos in an effort to reach an agreement on the proposed parley. The many meetings between U.S. Ambassador H. Sullivan and Nguyen Chan, the General Representative of Vietnam in Vientiane, finally resulted in a communiqué issued proclaiming the choice of Paris as the site for the preliminary session Hanoi and Washington.

The first session of the parley was fixed for 10 May. In April both sides had made public the composition of their teams. On the American side, W. Averrill Harriman was selected as peace mission. Mr. Harriman was to be assisted by Cyrus Vance Adviser to the U.S. President, General Andrew, and Mr. William Jordan. Jordan was a leading specialist on these affairs as one of the National Security Council. He was to be the functions of Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs.

On the North Vietnamese side the Hanoi delegation was to be headed by Minister of State Xuan Thuy who reportedly would have been in charge of Colonel Ha Van Lau, Nguyen Minh Vy, Nguyen, and others. Lau had served for many years as Chief of the Vietnamese Delegation in charge of liaison with the International Commission. Le was also to serve as official spokesman for the Vietnamese team.

The Paris Conference finally came into being but the war also increased in intensity. Although it was the view of all knowledgeable observers that the conflict would not die, it did not agree on how and when and where it would be fought.
One had to wait until the eve of May Day to see a first indication of the new face of the war.

On that day a big explosion was heard in Saigon, rocking the downtown section of the Vietnamese capital. The Viet Cong had tried to blow up the television center with over one hundred pounds of TNT hidden in a taxicab. It exploded at 1300 hours killing three persons, wounding another thirty, and destroying a house near the TV station but leaving the center intact. For many the explosion was the signal for an offensive campaign against Saigon to be launched the following day.

A bare 24 hours after it was known that U.S. and North Vietnamese representatives were to meet in Paris, Viet Cong troops hit the capital city of Saigon. The attack started at 0310 hours on May Day with a series of indiscriminate shellings of population centers which were to be followed by ground attacks in many places.

The May offensive was to last a full week. Enemy troops could only penetrate the outlying areas of the capital. Everywhere the attackers were repulsed or exterminated within seven days. On 25 May they tried to stage a comeback. This time they tried to enter the capital city through the Dong Ong Co and Binh Hoa areas just north of Saigon. Occupying many civilian houses they resisted sweeping government troops dispatched after them. In Cholon the Communists also succeeded in penetrating a few blocks of the Sixth Precinct. From the concrete buildings of this precinct they tried to oppose the advancing South Vietnamese. A series of fierce and bloody engagements took place in both areas.

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In their first attempt at mounting a general offensive the
High Command deployed assault troops everywhere but
recognized that this move was a grave mistake. Attacks can
mount when the assaulting troops are more numerous than
ners. Should the contrary be true, failure would be more apt
Moreover, without air support, the Communists could only
victory if they outnumbered friendly troops in target areas.
way to achieve this was to assault them repeatedly.

Recognition of this truth shook Communist commanders
dreams for a speedy victory and they selected the cities
Sai gon as the targets of the new offensive campaign. In
thing nothing would be more effective than keeping strong
urer on Saigon for such a strategy would perforce result
ere of growing confusion in the political nerve-center
main and be a propaganda victory of sorts abroad.

In their May offensive the Viet Cong strategy was reduced
five points: (a) to avoid frontal attacks on friendly
; (b) to infiltrate populous areas, especially during the
ness and wherever friendly troops were thinly deployed;
occupied area and fight until the end regardless of
in the absence of friendly reaction to spread to neigh-
and request reinforcements; and (5) to rely on sapper
uch as possible so that V.C. military pressure should be
friendly troops both from within and without.

In the troubled days of May numerous enemy troops
ch areas as Thi Nghe, Bay Hien, Minh Phung, Binh Thoi,
Pham The Hien. Although government units were
preventing the Communists from spreading to other
ad to call in air and artillery support to eliminate the
get the situation under control.

The intention of the enemy High Command, of course,
ieve big military victories but to create a state of
ould lead to immense political and economic difficulties
out opportunities for overthrowing the elected government
ain. In this undertaking the Communist High Command
seemed to have relied militarily on guerrilla warfare tactics, amended to some extent to fit the conditions of city fighting.

One week after the May offensive was started Communist intruders were swept out of Saigon. On 25 May they were back. They infiltrated from the Northern outskirts of Gia Dinh and the Southern outskirts near the "Y" bridge. They again applied the tactics of hugging populated areas and from these to strike at sweeping government troops.

In this second attempt enemy units fully exploited the shortcomings of friendly security belts. Enemy presence was only discovered after they had penetrated the city's outlying areas. North Vietnamese troops took the trouble of occupying such key points as big buildings, factories, churches and temples before going on the attack in any area. They also used such open areas as parks and cemeteries where they speedily dug trenches and other defensive installations.

After securing the occupation of a target area the intruders would immediately ask for reinforcements. The new troops would take advantage of darkness to move in by small groups. These troops, however, were extremely well-equipped and their firepower was comparable to that of any such formation in the world.

The composition of these groups were mostly troops that had had some rest after a previous attempt against the big city. In principle they were to take turns in attacking Saigon so that the V.C. military pressure might be constantly maintained against this political center. Also, in their effort to bring guerrilla warfare to the cities, Viet Cong troops unable to resist friendly pressure in one area would move to another and start the whole process all over again.

In adopting such a strategy the Communist High Command was willing to accept some casualties in exchange for the understandably heavy losses friendly troops would suffer in attacking the buildings Communist troops had turned into strongholds. On the whole the enemy did not concentrate his troops but divided them into many squad-size groups with the instruction to fight until the end.

Against this background one understands why the advancing friendly troops met with so many difficulties and in some cases had to call in air power and artillery. They were not the only ones to resort to artillery and bombs against populated areas. The Viet Cong, while continuing the second wave of attacks, pounded residential areas with
of 122mm rockets and 82mm mortar rounds, sowing death and terror among the population.

In summary, the Communist High Command had changed strategy in a most unmistakable manner. During the Tet offensive, troops attacked government and military installations in an attempt to create propitious conditions for the dispatch of political cadres where they could incite the people to overthrow the legal government. In both Communist pushes in May, the tactics employed a protracted occupation of territory while reducing casualties and losses of lessons learned from past offensives. The enemy did not attack population centers indiscriminately during Tet while in May they as kept high with constant bombardments of the cities.

Should one compare these two campaigns one would come to the conclusion that the Tet offensive was launched with the intention of a quick victory. After the Tet failure the second offensive was launched with a combination of ground assaults and air attacks which could not give the enemy a chance of leading to a military victory of any proportion. The enemy really sought in this second attempt was to subvert the Vietnamese administration politically and economically and to destroy the Vietnamese people the feeling that all was lost and that anything better than their present predicament.

These attempts, however, failed to produce anything of consequence. In the face of strong allied reactions most V.C. fighters lost courage. With morale problems increasing tenfold along with the number of dead among their ranks, many Communist troops had an end to their personal dilemmas. Quite a few surrendered just in the hope of being allowed to live.
CHAPTER II

TITLES FOR THE CITIES AND TOWNS
As described in the previous pages, the Viet Cong Tet were a two-pronged offensive campaign with the military prong to secure the occupation of as many population centers as possible and the political one seeking the overthrow of the legal administration through a series of uprisings. This pattern was to be repeated in most Communist efforts against the cities and townships of Vietnam.

Each attack was to be a little different from the other. In this chapter we shall describe in a detailed manner how the Viet Cong offensive looked in each and every province of the Republic, and the readers' curiosity may be satisfied and a proper assessment of the Viet Cong campaign may be derived. Such an attempt, in our opinion, would not be totally pointless.

In this venture the very first endeavor was to collect data and write impartial accounts of what happened. We relied on the findings of survey teams sent to various parts of the country and on the reports of journalists and correspondents who had witnessed what happened.

Beyond military events we have also paid attention to economic and social developments that contributed to making Vietnam what it was during the difficult days of 1968. The words of quite a few individuals and groups were also mentioned, but they were part of a historic process marking life in this nation in the first half of 1968.

This chapter has not been written with the purpose of describing the conduct of the Vietnamese soldier or the Vietnamese army, but rather to record all deeds of Vietnamese collective - that contributed so magnificently to keeping a free and independent nation.

This book is not big enough to include all the events and Viet Cong Winter-Spring Campaign. Major actions, on the other hand, are described as fully as possible while small operations are subject to sketchy treatment. Described to any extent are only half of the 28 attacks against the cities and townships.
In recounting these actions we have more often than not veered from straight reporting and inserted some personal feelings and impressions. Sometimes we also have included our own or local military commanders' assessments of the situation in their areas of responsibility, to include the shortcomings as well as the assets of the confronting troops. These observations, of course, cannot be completely objective but our ambition is to supply our readers with an unbiased account of the events of 1968 as possible. We wish to give all concerned, especially students of military affairs, an opportunity to assess the general situation on its own merits and formulate their private opinions.

Although far from being a complete account of what took place in the nation's four corps areas during the Communist Winter-Spring Campaign, it is our feeling that it includes enough data to assess the Viet Cong offensive as a failure. Since the offensive was a catastrophe of major proportions for the aggressors it contained the seeds of many later political and military developments that can only be helpful in achieving a just and lasting peace for the people of South Viet-Nam.
for Saigon

Communist troops attacked Greater Saigon - Saigon, Gia- polon - at exactly 0200 hours of the first day of the Year of

Firecrackers were still exploding in parts of the city at the night when late revelers began to hear gunfire. For however, there was little difference between them and it thought that the fun was still on. Some of the Saigonese to gunfire and explosion of grenades but this awareness did them because they dismissed them as "one of those things war".

When the sun rose the following morning everything throughout the big metropolis. Thousands of people to the streets, going to places of worship or to the homes. Little by little, however it dawned on the citizens was in the making although most people still stuck at it might simply be a coup d'etat such as they had the past.

Only at eight o'clock that fateful morning did Radio Saigon order proclaiming martial law throughout the land. The ed by Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky acting on order of Nguyen Van Thieu. He denounced the attack as an of the truce understanding.

the people, however, maintained their doubts until it at the Communists had in fact assaulted the capital. The advantage of the practically uncontrolled movement of in and out of the metropolis to infiltrate troops and the big city.

In the first hours of their offensive the Communists their efforts on the following key installations:

The headquarters of the Vietnamese Armed Forces at which they penetrated by forcing their way through Five. The intruders were successful in the first few later blocked when reinforcements arrived.
ENEMY'S PLAN OF ATTACK ON THE CAPITAL DURING TET (1968)
Independence Palace which the Communists attempted to through a side entrance on Nguyen Du street. In this attempt, Communist sapper troops failed altogether.

The Vietnamese Navy Headquarters on Bach-Dang Quay, attackers were killed on reaching the entrance.

The Tan Son Nhut Airport, which they did not succeed in. Their assault troops took heavy casualties while trying to the western end of the sprawling base near Ba Queo.

The radio station on Phan Dinh Phung Street, which the penetrated and occupied without being able to use the on the first floor of the building.

The American Embassy on Thong Nhat Boulevard, where front yard but were stopped there.

The chancery of the Embassy of the Philippines, which Cong occupied easily. There, however, they failed to capture assador who had time to take refuge elsewhere.

Communist troops also hit a few military installations on parts of the capital on that fateful night, such as the Co Loa Dong camps which were partially occupied for some time. asment also was recorded against Base 80 and Base 60 in Thong Tay area. In their assault on the Quang Trung Training a Hoc Mon District, Communist soldiers suffered severe before being able to reach the main gate. A few hours after tial attacks many groups of Communist soldiers could be seen parts of the sprawling city.

The enemy situation on the second day of the Year of the (Jan. 30) could be described as follows:

In the Northern suburb of Go Vap there was strong enemy on the artillery base of Co Loa, and the Phu Dong camp of fired branch. The Communist troops also tried their best to such populous areas as Go Vap and Xom Moi and extend lence to the Nga Nam Binh Hoa area.

West of the big city the presence of Communist units ely felt in the Ba Queo area as they prepared for an attack an Son Nhut Air Base. The enemy unit occupied the Vinatexco lant and used it as the starting point for their assault on Tan.
North Northeast of the metropolis the enemy occupied Hang Xanh area with the intention of attacking the Gia Dinh military district headquarters and making their presence felt on the Bien-Ho Highway.

West of Saigon a Viet Cong column penetrated the region of Phu-Tho and Ba-Hat.

Two Viet-Cong units, which at the time were in the Thu Duc and Hoc Mon districts, were active around the Thu Duc district headquarters and the Quang Trung military training camp.

In the downtown section of Saigon V. C. sapper troops assaulted their assigned targets while their comrades from the outer areas did their best to occupy populated areas, thus forcing Allied garrisons to be spread. They failed in all attempts for the very simple reason that their few troops were deployed against too many targets.

Although operating right within our back yards, they could not exploit this tactical advantage. As the sun rose again, enemy troops outside and within the city could not assemble for a coordinated attack.

The following morning the South Vietnamese high command had the situation well under control, not only in Saigon but throughout the nation as well. During all these troubled hours JGS was constantly in control of military operations throughout the nation. Despite the difficulties of the moment, JGS succeeded in bringing a few small units back to the capital city for its liberation.

In the first hours of the campaign the Communists left Americans very much alone. Except for an attack on the U. S. Embassy the many U. S. military and civilian installations throughout the elongated country remained untouched.

At the start of the Tet offensive only two general reserve battalions were in Saigon, the First and Eighth Airborne Battalions. They were preparing to go to the northernmost part of the Republic to help with the battle of Khe Sanh and another battle in the Highlands.
Following their failure to occupy South Vietnamese military centers in Saigon, the Communists sought survival by finding refuge among the people. Survivors of these unsuccessful attacks spread to unpopulated areas and attempted to incite the population to an uprising against the authorities. To prevent this, the Vietnamese Air Force was ordered to remain airborne all day and night to maintain a watch on enemy movements.

Seeing the airplanes strafing the enemy on the outskirts of threatened areas, thousands of people in the downtown area left their homes and fled on the outskirts of Saigon. This movement was to prove disastrous for South Vietnamese soldiers who were to be given the task of relieving intruders from the V.C.-occupied suburbs.

Within a few hours after the beginning of the V.C. onslaught, a counterattack was ordered. The Communist campaign was only a day old when two companies of the First Airborne Battalion were ordered to relieve enemy pressure around the radio station. By early morning, the area was completely free of V.C. presence.

The government troops were less successful at JGS. Two companies of the Eighth Airborne Battalion, sent to dislodge the enemy from the Armed Forces Language School which dominated the eastern end of the Tan Son Nhut Airport, also failed to clear the area of the enemy. The two remaining companies, deployed for the protection of the Armed Forces Language School, failed to dislodge the enemy from infiltrating Ba-Queo and the huge factory just outside the defense perimeter of the all-important Tan Son Nhut Airport.

In the meantime, the Fifth Ranger Group, consisting of Battalions (30, 33, 34 and 38) normally assigned to the defense of Thu Duc, Nha Be, Binh Chanh, and Hoch Mah, decided to dispatch two of its battalions to the capital at daylight, on the second day of Tet. The 30th and 38th reached the suburbs. At four o'clock in the morning, a company arrived in the area of Hang Xanh where it immediately fought the enemy. The 38th, starting from Nha Be, also arrived at the race track at about the same time.
Two hours later the Fourth Marine Battalion was heli-lifted from Vung Tau to Saigon although it had been continuously engaged in operations in the northern provinces a bare 48 hours before. The Marine Task Force, which consisted of the First and Second Battalions and was garrisoning in the area of Cai Lay, Dinh Tuong province, also was brought to Saigon early that evening.

Before the arrival of these troops the intruders had moved from the outskirts to the vicinity of Nguyen Kim Boulevard, which is near the Cong Hoa Stadium. They had not met with strong resistance up to this point. They had only fired a few shots at a police station south of the race track, a field police camp on Tran Quoc Toan Boulevard, and a few other installations in that general area.

The Communist column succeeded in occupying the race track and residential areas around the Women Auxiliary Corps School. From this point they deployed to a big quadrangle made up by the Nguyen Tri Phuong, Tran Quoc Toan, Ly Thai To and Minh Pfung Boulevards and extending from the Tu Nghiem Pagoda to the seat of militant Buddhism at An Quang Pagoda. A few hours later the Nguyen Kim Boulevard came under aerial attack following the reported presence of "a great many Viet Cong".

That afternoon enemy troops penetrated the Nhi Dong Hospital, harassed the base camp of the Fifth MP Battalion on Ly Thai To Boulevard and from there reached Su Van Hanh Street and the An Quang Pagoda, occupying part of it. Their presence in this populous section of the city indicated their intention of staging a popular uprising which, if successful, would be directed to other parts of the city.

During all this time the people of Saigon only had the local radio and their ears to help in keeping themselves informed of what was happening in their city. Since most newspaper offices were still closed for the long holiday, Radio Saigon was the only source of information. Unlike previous troubled days in the capital, the national radio not only broadcast martial music but it also gave short news bulletins every now and then.

The radio station soon announced that the tempo of fighting in the Hang Xanh area had been reduced a little, following some minor successes of the government troops. Through the radio the people of Saigon also were notified that the area of Ba Queo, especially around the Vinatexco textile plant, must be evacuated by
command of the insurgents was known to be in
repeated unanswered calls for the Viet-Cong
under, the Vinatexco area was leveled, thus preventing
from gathering enough troops for a night attack on the
Son Nhat air base.

In the evening, helicopter gunships were used to
bomb the WAC School. Infantry were dispatched to
a section of the Nguyen Van Thoai Boulevard. This
led the race track which was already under Communist

early morning of the third day of the Year of the
eight battalions of the General Reserve had been
Saigon. They were deployed as follows:

- Sixth and Eighth Airborne Battalions: Their mis-
tive enemy pressure on the Eastern Gate of the Tran

- First Airborne Battalion: Its mission was to guard
while serving as combat reserve in Saigon.

- Second Marine Battalion: Its role was to defend
junctures Number Two and Four in Gia Dinh.

- First Marine Battalion: Its task was to cut all
aval of Communist elements attacking the Co Loa

- 38th Ranger Battalion: Its role was to liberate the

- 38th Ranger Battalion: Its role was to liberate
Ha sections of the city.

Feb. 1 the headquarters of the Vietnamese Armed
forces were temporarily cleared of Communist intruders. Prior to the
area, however, helicopter gunships had to be used,
table damage to the Armed Forces Language
school, and some of the minor military installations
ate Four. South Vietnamese Marines had reoccu-
Phu Dong camps where the enemy had penetrated
part of their Tet Campaign.

olon, the Chinese section of Saigon, the situation
arious with more and more Viet Cong units reported
in the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Precincts. To meet this threat the Second Marine Battalion, which had been ordered to Cholon, immediately launched an operation against the area of the An Quang Pagoda. The 33d Ranger Battalion also was sent to a new front opening in Binh An in the Seventh Precinct.

The Sixth Marine Battalion, which had been in Bong Son on the Central Coast, was airlifted to Saigon where it arrived on 2 February. After resting the night in Saigon, these elite troops were immediately dispatched to the sub-sector of Thu Duc.

What was the enemy's strength in Saigon?

To stage this unprecedented attack, the Communist High Command had deployed a total of approximately 17 battalions, both Main Force and regional troops including a battalion-size group of sappers. Included in this total were only those forces directly participating in the Battle for Saigon. Not included were major units such as the Seventh and Ninth Divisions that were kept as reserves in the vicinity of the capital.

The Communist attacking force at the height of the V.C. attack included the following:

1. One battalion of Regiment 271/CT. 9 reinforced by Battalion 56/U. 80 with the mission of attacking the Quang-Trung Cam and neighboring areas.

2. Battalions 267 and 269, reinforced by elements of Regiment 271, with the mission of assaulting the Tan Son Nhut Airport.

3. Two battalions of Regiment 273/CT. 9 with the mission of attacking the Thu Duc Sub-Sector.

4. Battalion Cu Chi One, reinforced by a battalion of Regiment 101/CT. 7 and elements of the Second Mechanized Battalion of the "R" Command, attacking and occupying the many depots at Go Vap.

5. Battalion Go Mon Two, in conjunction with Sapper Group J. 1/F. 100, was to attack the JGS general headquarters through Gate Four.

6. Battalion Di An Three or 3/165 A was in charge of Hang Xanh area.
At the immediate Pagoda Pagoda in Binh Binh-Tan Six or 6/165 was in charge of Ba-Hat.

Long-An 508 was to control the area of Binh-

Group F.100 had the mission of attacking the Tran Hung Dao Camp, the Navy headquar-Embassy, and the Philippine Embassy.

This threat the South Vietnamese Army brought possible to Saigon. As of 4 February total ARVN reached ten battalions, not including the thou- in the capital.

**Hung Dao**

February 1968 an operation code named "Operation launched under the direct command of General Chief of the Joint General Staff. Its purpose was to the Communist threat in Saigon. Major General Chief of Staff, was to serve as Chief of Staff and Hao Hon as Vice Chief of Staff of the operating

Tran Hung Dao named after the nation's times victor over the Mongolian hordes seven to take place in Saigon and the neighboring areas. consisting of five tactical areas of responsibility such area which was entrusted to U.S. troops. The South Vietnamese responsibility were as

"A" under the responsibility of Major General Du of the Airborne Division. Zone "B" with Nh Yen, deputy commander of the Marine Corps.

Admiral General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, Director General of Zone "D" with Colonel Tran Van Hai, command- Zone "E" with Brigadier General Ngo Dzu. entrusted to the U.S. High Command (See chart).

A. Zone "A" was made the responsibility of the
FRIENDLY DISPOSITION DURING TRAN HUNG DAO CAMPAIGN
IN THE CAPITAL
on which employed two task forces. Task Force Two, Fourth and Eighth Battalions had within its tactical area of regions of Ba Queo, Phu Tho Hoa, Ba Dinh and Tan Be Three, including the First and Third Battalions, had Co Loa, Xom Moi and Go Vap. The commander of Zone this disposal an artillery battalion and a group of

Zone B. Zone "B" was the responsibility of the South Hind Corps and came under the operational control of Force B reinforced by an artillery battalion and an Zone "B" included the areas of Gia Dinh, Thu Duc Highways.

Zone C. Zone "C", which included some of the relatively of the Capital, was the responsibility of the Police. First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Precincts. elements, reinforced by field police, had the mission of operations to separate Communist elements from

Zone D. Zone "D" was the responsibility of the Ranger under the operational control of the Fifth Ranger included four battalions: The 33th in Binh Thoi and in Minh Phung, the 41st in Phu-Dinh and the 30th Rangers had within their TAOR the Sixth, Seventh, acts. They also were reinforced by the Fifth Armored patrol group and a reconnaissance company. group operated on the Kinh Doi Canal.

Zone E. Zone "E", including the sprawling Tran Hung one of the neighboring populated areas, was the res local garrisons. The troops, in addition to their staff were organized into companies and battalions for the most important installation. They had the assistance Honor Guards, an MP Company, an M.41 Tank ed group and a group of reconnaissance cars.

of these forces was based on the following criteria: to include 118 men and four such companies were alion which also was to have a headquarter group such battalions made up a group which then would On this basis most people serving at headquarters part in the defence of their installation with the
possible exception of very few high-ranking officers and some of the indispensable staff elements. It was not rare to see majors serving as squad leaders and lieutenants serving as ordinary foot soldiers.

On 7 February 1968 the group was presented to Genet Vien and then immediately went on operation. It was called the Tri Hung Dao Group. Its four battalions were known as the Ly Thuong Le Loi, Nguyen Hue and Le Van Duyet battalions.

Except for Zone "C" and "E" police elements in all other areas were put under operational control of the local military command.

Zone F. Zone "F", assigned to the American troops included as of 9 February the area south of the Kinh Doi Canal and of Phu Tho Hoa. Outside this zone the American High Command organized a security belt with the 1/27 Battalion operating in Hoc Chi Minh district; 2/27 Battalion and Company A of the 1/4 Armored Battalion in the area of Binh Loc; 3/27 Battalion in conjunction with the 7th Mechanized Company and an APC group in the area southwest and of the Seventh Precinct; 2/237 Battalion in Nha Be district; and a force consisting of 1/18 Battalion and some tanks in Thu Duc and Giong Ong To area.

Offensive résumé

With opposing forces deployed as presented in the preceding pages, what did the friendly forces and the Communists do during the critical days of the month of February?

1. **The Western Front.** Two Viet Cong battalions (267th and 269th) reinforced by elements of the First Battalion, Regiment CT. 9 Division, appeared in the area of Ba Queo at the very beginning of the fighting, coming from outlying suburbs to the west of the city. An initial strike force of about 100 men was soon followed by the 267th and 269th Battalion. This task force was put under the command of a headquarter group that quartered at the Vinatexco textile company preparation for the advance on the Tan Son Nhat Airport.

At Approximately 0345 hours the First Company of 269 Battalion volunteered for an attack on both towers OF. 51-51 and OF. 49-50. They met with strong resistance from the garrisons. Unable to penetrate the air base through that gate, they cut a route through the mine field with the intention of destroying the two towers at any
... down one of the towers with their B. 40 individual killing seven of the defenders and wounding the rest. The troops in the other outpost withdrew from the tower.

In the next 40 hours the intruders advanced toward the end of the Tan Son Nhut airstrip. At that very moment two M. 8 tanks appeared on the scene bringing a still more effective collection of vehicles bringing a still more effective collection of vehicles. This group included staff officers of the two reinforcement companies that morning for the protection of Vice President.

In the precious minutes that the first friendly rounds hit the Communists when they still occupied the Tan Son Nhut airstrip. The intruders hastily tried to leave the battle area and none in this open field. At that moment the two M. 8 tanks made a pincer movement, leaving the frontal attack to the Force-Airborne combined group. The Communists, under mounting pressure, withdrew to the towers they occupied. A single friendly assault wave resulted in the destruction of all 162 intruders. 

The Vietnamese Air Command learned that all 162 intruders were killed.

In a mass grave Air Force bulldozers had to dig the mass grave Air Force bulldozers had to dig the mass grave Air Force bulldozers had to dig. A single friendly assault wave resulted in the destruction of all 162 intruders.

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where minutes later they clashed with the Communists. With the support of gunships and fighter-bombers they kept the situation under control. At about this same time a U.S. armored column, passing through this area, was attacked by the V.C. who succeeded in destroying two vehicles. Quick reaction by the Americans not only kept the road open but also forced the Communists out of Of. 5 and caused them to retreat in the direction of the Vinatexco factory.

Following their defeat at the southwestern end of the strip, the enemy returned to the Vinatexco factory to prepare for another round. They did not have time to do anything. The paratroopers, in conjunction with the Air Force, pushed their attack on the textile factory and practically annihilated all members of the V.C. 267th Battalion. Normalcy was restored in the area.

2. The Northeastern Front V.C. troops came to the area of Hang Xanh after going through such areas as Vuon Trau and Gia Ong To in the district of Thu Duc. The enemy had concentrated Di An Three in this area since the first day of the Year of the Monkey. They prevented the population from leaving the area many hours before the attack actually began, in order to maintain secrecy.

Around 0200 hours on the second day of the Year of the Monkey, the enemy attacked the Hang Xanh Police Station with big guns, immediately destroying the protecting wall of the station. The attack was followed by a ground assault in the course of which the attackers killed some of the policemen standing guard. They ransacked the place, throwing papers and documents all around.

In the meantime the 30th Ranger Battalion had received the order to move from its base camp in Thu Duc toward the capital city. It arrived at the Hang Xanh area in the early hours of 31 January, but was not aware of the presence of the Communists at the gates of Saigon. The Ranger column was moving at a hair-raising speed when it came under fire from Viet Cong troops lurking on both sides of the road and firing from two storied houses near the police station.

The lead vehicle was hit by a B. 40 rocket and immediately caught fire. Although two Rangers were killed and another two wounded, the crack troops reacted speedily advancing in the direction of the enemy machinegun positions. Under the command of Captain Phan Van Sanh they used their ammunition sparingly since the civilian population had not been able to leave the area.

Viet Cong troops left the Nguyen Duy Khang High School.
With the suppression under way, passing through the gates of Hang Xanh and Cau Son, suddenly in their own town.

...
30th Battalion Rangers preparing for an attack on the Hang Xanh Police Station and nearby houses.
possibly because of the relatively low exchange of fire. Shots and explo-
sions could be heard intermittently until dawn. By then Captain Sanh
had ordered his troops into three columns ready to move against the
enemy. Sanh also had ordered his soldier to tell the civilian popula-
tion to evacuate the area prior to counterattacking at ten o'clock.

Some of the people living in this region had left for more
secure zones by eight o'clock. Yet quite a large number of civilians,
especially in the Cau Son area, could not get out. A Brown Beret column,
starting from Newport a little before noon, moved cautiously through
populated areas of Thi Nghe with the intention of hitting the enemy
from behind. The fighting became intense from the very first minute.

At approximately the same time another Ranger column,
starting from the Buddhist pagoda bordering on the Bien Hoa Highway
assaulted the Communist force entrenched in the police station and
some houses nearby. Only individual weapons were used in order to
minimize civilian casualties. Both government soldiers and Commu-
nist troops closely watched one another. At nightfall this mutual obser-
vation was facilitated by the glare of flares hanging in the sky.

The following day government soldiers again told the
civilian population to evacuate the area prior to calling in air strikes
against known V.C. positions. The civilian population departed from
the area before the planes arrived and strafed Communist positions.
The opposing troops remained face to face for their inevitable confron-
tation. Early in the afternoon a column of M.41 tanks and M.113
armored cars arrived, opening the way for the advancing government
foot soldiers.

Captain Sanh was leading his battalion while moving in
the direction of Cau Son bridge. The armored column had barely
covered 200 yards when a deafening explosion was heard which set the
leading car afire and killed two soldiers while wounding two others.
The Ranger commander escaped unscathed. Having observed the
origin of the warhead, Captain Sanh directed fire on the B.40 position.
An hour later his troops found three Viet Cong dead beside a B.40
rocket launcher and an M.79 grenade launcher.

The column of advancing troops soon had to stop its
thrust. An immense fire was devastating the area from Hang-Xanh to
the breeding farm which was administered by Lasan Brothers in Thi
Nghe. Viet Cong elements, taking advantage of the conflagration,
withdrew to outlying areas.
Tank support of Rangers in Hang Xanh area on 2 February 1968.
Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, Police Director General (first from left) on the Hang Xanh front.

Advancing Rangers preparing for an attack near the Hang Xanh intersection on 2 February 1968.
View of Hang Xanh street after 60 hours of fighting.

Hang Xanh after the battle

of 60 hours of fighting, the Viet Cong captured 12 prisoners, 22 in all, and killed another five. Three days later, 25 were killed and 45 were wounded.

The evacuation work of an estimated 10,000 inhabitants of Hang Xanh took several days. By 0330 hours on 16 March, the army had searched all of the neighboring streets. The enemy was driven to the battlefield policy positions within the old city. The army troops, who had been assigned the task of clearing the streets, encountered the enemy in the streets and alleys. The fight continued until dawn, when the enemy was completely annihilated. The streets were empty, and the remaining five to six enemy were in graves.

Hang Xanh was a busy area, a hall of 375,000 people, and the conduct of the fight was very fierce. The enemy attempted to hastily withdraw to the area near the hills of the Three Mountains. Nguyen Lam
The battle of Hang Xanh had come to an end. In the course of uninterrupted fighting the enemy had lost 85 killed, and a significant number of weapons. The loss included weapons, 5 B. 40 individual rocket launchers and weapons served by the enemy. On the friendly side twelve Rangers with two members of the armored column; another and one M. 113 armored car was destroyed.

The remarkable of all was the small number of civilians along battle. Although Hang Xanh had an estimated 2,000, only two were killed by stray bullets although some became homeless refugees.

The Phu Tho Battle. In the Western suburb of Phu strength consisted mainly of Battalion Binh-Tan Six, rated the city without encountering too many difficulties. The intruders had full control of the race track and the. From this vicinity they mounted an attack on the ion but were repulsed, thanks to the strong fortifica-police compound.

Thirty-Eighth Ranger Battalion, which had been union of restoring order in this region, had arrived on early hours of 31 January. Under the command of Cuong the crack troops debarked on Tran Quoc and from there moved in the direction of the Nguyen et. At the corner of Petrus Ky and Tran Quoc Toan in Cuong ordered his troops to spread out and then Communists frontally and from behind.

Infiltrators, however, were not going to let govern- run them easily. They had organized themselves in buildings, especially those bordering on small strongest along Nguyen Tieu La and Nguyen Tri. When government troops appeared in that general ets greeted the Rangers, starting one of the most saigon.

The frontal assault troops failed to end Communist and Ranger column hit the enemy from behind, once in the Phu Tho area caused the Communists in the direction of Trieu Da, Nguyen Kim, Nguyen Van Thoai Streets.
One of the many fires burning in Cholon on 2 February 1968

Civilians leaving VC threatened areas.
prior to the Ranger encirclement movement, however, "...
mander had ordered one of his companies and a recon-
to take advantage of the enemy's preoccupation with

Nguyen Tri Phuong, Nguyen Tieu La and Trieu Da
ate the area delineated by Nguyen Kim, Nguyen Lam

Thoai Boulevards. This created what Vo Nguyen Giap
of intermingled presence with troops of both sides
most confused line of battle. The enemy was also
a quarters, Nguyen Van Thoai and Thiec Market.
itial defeat of the Viet Cong, both sides temporarily
ng, thus giving the civilian population a chance to
one.

A three-pronged attack was launched after the population
ed, which was around 1000 hours. The Ranger bat-
in three sides and elements of an engineer unit, the
ation Battalion, and some field policemen effectively
ack. Some Brown Berets made close contact with V.
Nguyen Kim, Nguyen Van Thoai and Le Dai Hanh

Within minutes the Nguyen Tri Phuong area disappeared
oke and fire with explosions of all sorts shaking the
copter gunships struck at enemy positions, adding to
the intruders, who were left with no alternative but to
of the Communist troops took refuge in the Children's
small groups scattered as best they could. Some of
Viet-Cong who mistook the Dao Duy Tu Camp for
immediately killed.

The bulk of the enemy force, however, succeeded in
direction of the Le Dai Hanh and Lu-Gia quarter
se track. The government troops maintained contin-
t the enemy and, in following them step by step,
position near the Cong-Hoa Stadium and

Nguyen Van Thoai Boulevard.

Attacking troops found a wheel-mounted machinegun
of the battle area. This deadly weapon was located
in the six-storied Golden Willow Building on Tran
ard. Its capture was made possible by the extraordi-
grangers of the First Company under the command of
Ngoc-An. Two of the four officers and men who
This heavy machinegun was captured atop the Golden Willow building in Cholon.
the building and seized the weapon were killed. They were identified as First Lieutenant Pham and Private As soon as Lt. Pham had learned of the presence of a heavy machinegun atop the tall building and had received the word to engage the enemy climbing up waterspouts in order to catch the enemy, he and his handful of men tried to penetrate the machinegun. His men killed the Communists in a rapid firefight. Losing the machinegun, enemy troops withdrew.

Recurrent developments in this general area proved that the Communists began infiltrating this part of the area, and that government reinforcement would be brought by helicopters. Their tremendous efforts to bring reinforcements to the top floor of the Golden Willow Building was a reflection of their intention to use it against the troops when these should arrive. Predicted, barely two hours after the heavy machinegun was captured, a reinforcement group was dispatched to the top floor of the Golden Willow Building and there ordered the machinegun had not been captured by Lt. An Phu-Tho Battle lasted nearly two days resulting in the capture of the machinegun, four B.40 individual rocket launchers, and two prisoners. Government troops also captured the heavy machinegun as well as destroying another two.

Normalcy was restored in this area, as the Ranger Battalion was reinforced by one of its companies to reinforce government control in this area. Normalcy was restored in this area, the Ranger Battalion was reinforced by one of its companies to reinforce government control in this area. This was done because during the year of the Monkey, Communist infiltrators began infiltrating this part of the area of Binh Hoa after being dislodged from Go Xanh itself the 30th Ranger Battalion was involved with relief work following its victories two days earlier.
4. The Go Vap Front. The Go Vap front was continuously active from the beginning of the Tet offensive. Enemy strength in the area consisted of Battalion Cu Chi One and another battalion from the 101st Regiment. This initial force was strengthened with elements of the Second Mechanized Battalion of the "R" Command. This column penetrated Saigon after joining with another column consisting of Battalion Go Mon Two and a sapper unit called J. 1/100.

Arriving near its destination, this force again divided into two. The first column went through the village of An Nhơn for an attack on the logistics area of Go Vap. The second column followed the railroad track for an attack on the Joint General Staff through Gate Number Four on the northeastern side of the sprawling headquarters compound.

The first column attacked Go Vap in the early hours of 31 January. They occupied Phu Dong and Co Loa Camps, respectively, the Headquarters of the Armored Branch and the Artillery Branch, having driven off some of the garrisoning troops and killed the rest. The Communist also attacked Base 80 of the Ordnance Branch and Base 60 of the Communications Branch. The latter assaults, however, did not succeed.

The enemy assault on Base Camp 80 was repulsed mainly with grenades and well directed fire from three heavy machineguns located atop the camp. Major Doan Du Khuong, who commanded the camp at the time, was directing the counterfire when he was hit in the face and instantly killed.

The second Communist column commenced their attack on Gate Number Four much later. Starting their assault by about 07 hours, they succeeded in penetrating the area but were immediately pinned down in the buildings of the Armed Forces Languages School. Two hours later airborne troops, arriving as reinforcements, conducted a counterattack with a few M. 41 tanks leading the attack.

Communist resistance in this area was fierce. Taking advantage of extensive fortifications and multistoried buildings on Di Nguy boulevard, V. C. troops kept the crack paratroopers at a distance. One of the tanks was destroyed and a number of government soldiers were wounded in a day-long seesaw battle that saw no winner or loser in this first day of fighting.
Assaulting Xom Moi as recorded by an army of the 3rd Airborne group at the Co Loa Camp 6 Feb. 1968.
An Nhon after the battle of 6 February 1968

Some of the weapons captured by government troops
Northeast of Co Loa Camp on 7 February 1968
following day, 1 February, the Second Marine Battal-
ion to Gate Four to help with the task of clearing this
. The commander of the Airborne Division requested
given the honor of dislodging the intruders. The request
Sixth Airborne Battalion was brought to the scene and
units already engaged counterattacked the enemy.
minutes before the counterattack began, helicopter
brought in for intense strafing of the installations
Quarters Company and the AG School. Following
roops advanced toward the enemy from Gates
pincer movement that grew tighter with each passing
red and outgunned, the insurgents broke off in the
Nguy boulevard.
Clearing operation was pronounced terminated by 1000
had left behind a dozen bodies. According to military
in the battle zone during the fighting, he did have time
of his dead and wounded. His firepower during this
the simple reason that he took advantage of ready
ome of the weapons left behind by our troops in their
the first hours of the offensive. Some of the weapons
and post of the Headquarters Company were burned.
communist troops retreating from the Headquarters
chased by South Vietnamese marines from the Second
The Marines had come to Vo Di Nguy Boulevard and
C. forces from the railroad track leading to the
station. The Blood Bank was also speedily liberated.
In the afternoon the First Marine Battalion was
prevent the enemy from withdrawing in a
Hours later another battalion, the Fourth Marine,
the same area. It was only a matter of hours
nts were driven out of the Co Loa and Phu Dong
30 hours that day, these two important installations
ated.
nts of the Viet Cong force realized they were being
operate effort to get away from this enormous trap.
pronged attack on positions of the First Marine.
luted in greater casualties on the part of the
The Binh Hoa Front. By 2 February, with the Go Van back to normal, fighting spilled over into the Binh Hoa Intersection Gia Dinh City. This section was a very populated area with a complicated road system. When the 38th Ranger Battalion arrived at the intersection of Nguyen Van Hoc and Truong Cong Dinh Streets, at 0800 hours, its forward elements received heavy fire from V. C. troops positioned along both streets.

Although supported by a column of M. 113 armored personnel carriers, friendly troops restrained their response since overreaction might have brought about many unnecessary civilian casualties. A rocket had exploded in the path of the advancing column in the very minutes of this battle. Although it did no damage, it killed a Green and wounded two others. For these reasons the Ranger commander stopped the column and called upon the population to evacuate the area. The insurgents, as they had done on previous occasions, did their best to prevent the civilians from complying.

During the relative lull that ensued, the Communists withdrew to the many blind alleys and side streets with the hope of hitting the government column from behind. It was about ten o'clock when enemy movement started and it was immediately reported to the Rangers. They at once blocked the enemy route. Unable to do what they had set out to do, the Communists took refuge in a pagoda and a cemented house on Phan Van Tri Street. They also occupied a multi-storied building at the Binh Hoa Intersection.

The Rangers once more had to call on the population to leave the battle zone, telling them that government forces would attack the Viet Cong force within half an hour. As soon as the Green Berets resumed their advance, the Communist directed a hail of bullets at them. Helicopter gunships had been called and their deadly fire soon made the situation untenable for the intruders.

Within minutes after the arrival of the gunships a V.C. platoon lay dead with their weapons. They fell in front of the pagoda where they had sought refuge. Faced with such firepower, the Communists had no choice but to retreat in the direction of the cemetery. Close to the cemetery was a concrete house which the insurgents promptly occupied. Meanwhile the Rangers also had assaulted two nearby houses and killed three insurgents whose bodies could be seen from hundreds of yards away.

By this time the fighting had developed into an immense
the Go Vap area intersection in with a complicated attack at the streets, at from V.C. troops.

Armored personnel carriers overran the village. A B-40 tank hit the very first of the Green Beret commandos, killing the battle commanders, did they?

Communists withdrew of hitting position when the and a cemetery building

population to would attack Green Berets bullets at early fire soon

ships a V.C., the pagoda the Cemetery. urgency altered two could be seen in an immense

Brown Beret of the 38th Ranger Battalion advancing through a screen of smoke in their tank supported attack on the Binh Hoa intersection (the fourth day of the year of the Monkey).
Brown Berets assaulting a Communist position at the Binh Hoa intersection in Gia Dinh.
A new dimension was added by two fires burning at the Binh-Hoa Intersection and the Bach from these points Communist snipers had been firing troops. Though choking in the smoky atmos-
ets still continued their advance. They had

mer column was immediately divided into small
tiny alleys and side streets of the area while
ancer movement in order to catch the Communists

ong lasted quite a few hours even though the Viet

lders in this particular area. The terrain
dificulties which were complicated by the thousands

ds of houses and huts throughout the area,
ment troops from taking full advantage of their

uary the Forty-First Ranger Battalion was heli-
ene the Saigon battle and the fighting in the
oon died.

here in Saigon. Elsewhere in the capital city figh-
t raided basis. Small groups of infiltrators con-
orses from their positions in populated areas.

ese section of Saigon enemy pressure seemed
sing day. Although there were no major battles,
ve two Viet Cong battalions - Long An 508
ery active in the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and
spite heavy losses during the previous days.
ods had to block practically all streets
ors one by one to counter this threat. Fires*
here and the population in threatened areas had

the difficulty faced was the situation in the
enemy pressure had been acutely felt since 31
the Binh-An Catholic diocese of Bishop Hoang-
am's most noted anti-Communist fighters.
or had spread around town that Father Quynh
immediately denied.
Firemen extinguishing blaze near the An Quang Pagoda on the 1st of February 1968.

The charred remains of buildings near the An Quang Pagoda.
A South Vietnamese Marine from the 2nd Battalion amongst refugees near the An Quang Pagoda.
The Ban Co area after the big fire of 7 February 1968.

Firemen in action on Nguyen Thien Thuat street (1 Feb. 1968)