The explosion of a youth center near the Television House is viewed by many observers as marking the start of the May offensive. The photo above shows the center following the explosion that afternoon.

(3 May 1968)

In the early hours of 5 May 1968, the Communists began a second wave of offensive on Saigon. VC sapper troops were to take a major part in this attack. But on that very day many were those arrested or taken prisoners by government forces.
Early in the morning of 5 May a counterattack was ordered with thousands of government troops trying to eliminate Viet Cong pockets and prevent other communist units from entering the city. A Ranger element was dispatched to the Binh Thoi area as it reached Phu Binh it came under attack by an unknown enemy force.

Since the enemy did his best to stick to populated areas and since quite a few innocent civilians were in the battle zone, all day fight ensued without the Rangers being able to dislodge intruders. It was in this area that a tragedy happened to four journalists who simply committed the mistake of trying to do their job properly.

It was about 0900 hours when a jeepload of foreign journalists traveling on Road 52 was stopped by the insurgents and ordered. Among those who lost their lives on that day were Ronald Laramy and Bruce S. Pigott of Reuters, Michael Y. Birch of the Australian Associated Press and John L. Cantwell of Time Magazine. Another victim of Viet Cong atrocity was Count Hasso Von Kollern, who also was killed on this front.

Just at dawn another government force including a Marine element and some riot police was dispatched to the area with the task of preventing enemy troops from spreading to other sections of the suburb. Since most houses in this area are of bricks and concrete, the friendly troops tried to tighten the noose while assaulting house by house. They soon found that their task not be completed during the day. It was in this area that Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, Police Director General, was severely wounded when he led his troops in a particularly bold attack.

The insurgents had less chance in town center Saigon. Only a few groups that succeeded in penetrating the area, were speedily eliminated. Most typical of this was a Viet Cong group that arrived at De Tham Street from the areas of Cau Kho, Rach Ban, and Bien Chuong Duong. The De Tham area is among the most populated in Saigon. The enemy group included about ten men equipped with automatic rifles and grenades. They were engaged in armed propaganda when police from the Second Precinct arrived on the scene. A lone grenade explosion threw the group into confusion, permitting the police to kill three of them, including a woman cadre, take the prisoners and capture two AK 47's and two pistols.
Also in this general area a small Viet Cong force trying to use the Rach Ban bridge was met by Major Tran Minh Cong at the head of a police squad. The enemy opened fire and slightly wounded Major whose rapid reaction resulted in the death of one of the police officers. Paying no attention to his wound, Cong immediately ordered troops to assault a house in which the intruders had sought refuge.

The communists tried to resist but the gallant policemen killed one of them to death and took two women cadre prisoners. In this police later found eight AK.47 automatic rifles, four Chinese communist pistols, a loudspeaker and a mimeograph machine.

Cau Kho was the third area to be penetrated by the Viet Minh. When a police group was sent in, communist resistance was very weak. The sweep was completed by 1000 hours resulting in one enemy dead, four captured including two women cadre, four individual weapons confiscated. The women were about 22 years of age and had all necessary papers to allow them to live undetected in government controlled areas.

The De Tham front was much more serious at the beginning but when the police here too, were most effective and the area returned to normal in the afternoon.

In the Third Precinct, a four-man sapper group of Viet Minh appeared on Nguyen Thien Thuat Street but they were speedily eliminated. Fighting began at 0500 hours when a police jeep was hit by sniper fire starting an operation which became the responsibility of the local riot police unit.

When the Viet Cong group, which included three men and sought refuge in a house of Alley 22 the owner of the place at notified police of their unwanted presence. A search was immediately undertaken resulting in two communist dead and the two others including the girl. Two AK.47 automatic rifles and two pistols were also taken along with some explosives. The Ban Go area was back to normal.

At Xom Chieu in the Fourth Precinct four women cadre quickly started their propaganda activities when they were captured. The four Chinese Communists pistols. In the Fifth Precinct the area was still in control of the main administrative building when Colonel Le Ngoc Tru, the local police chief, led his troops to assault the VC held building.
Unable to resist, the intruders tried to flee but seven of them were shot dead and six individual weapons taken. Another Viet Cong group starting from the corner of Tran Quy and Pho Co Dila streets tried to assault the local police station but fell into an ambush. Six were killed and five taken prisoners.

In the Sixth Precinct beside the clash reported at Bien Thoi the enemy's pressure was so intense that in the morning the inhabitants started evacuating the area. Following this, VC pressure became more acutely felt in the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Precincts. Especially in this last area enemy gunners had set up mortar positions from which they could fire on the city. Although no major actions were reported during the day, it was feared the enemy had infiltrated enemy men to cause further trouble.

In summary for the 14 hours from 0400 hours to 1800 hours of the Fifth of May 1968, 32 communists were killed, 25 captured, and 70 weapons confiscated. On the side of police six riot policemen made the supreme sacrifice.

6 May 1968. The enemy opened another front at the Bay Hien intersection near the airport. An enemy unit had penetrated this area following Village Road 14, Ho Tan Duc and Le Van Duyet Streets, to arrive at the cemetery of the French Army. But this communist unit was to be completely destroyed by an airborne element moved in from Bien Hoa.

In the afternoon by 1800 hours a VC sapper group appeared at Level Crossing Number Six shooting to death a US soldier who happened to ride his Honda motorcycle through the area. An operation was immediately launched resulting in the death of three Viet Cong but the communists continued to hide in houses bordering the railways track.

Meanwhile the fighting continued in Thi Nghe, although at a lesser degree of intensity. Only in Binh Thoi was it growing more serious in spite of airpower that ground troops had to call in. In the evening Colonel Dam Van Quy, Special Assistant to General Loan, mortally wounded while inspecting the troops in the area of Minh Phung and Phu Lam.

During the night enemy gunners again shelled the city. Warheads fell in several places especially on Nguyen Canh Chan Street near the Cho Quan Electricity Complex, the Taxi Terminal.
Hue Boulevard, and the Saigon Police Headquarters. One rocket also hit Hotel Catinat on Nguyen Hue Boulevard in downtown.

8. Enemy troops again appeared in the Eighth Precinct more on Pham The Hien Quay. The situation in the Binh Thoi area was serious as ground troops found themselves with the im-

of penetrating these VC held parts of the city. In the
jets were called in to strike both areas especially Binh Tho.
there were many fires were immediately reported sending high into
cy many columns of black smoke.

All though the night flares were seen illuminating the
houses were still burning by the hundreds. In spite of the
order the population from outlying areas flocked downtown.
be done to prevent the movement. These refugees chose
buildings, schools and parks for refuge.

With the exception of Thi Nghe where a Marine operation
restoration of complete order by 1300 hours and the Bay
section where normalcy was also restored, the situation
the outlying sections of the big metropolis remained

8. The situation in Cholon grew more serious with enemy
sneaking the Binh Tien Bridge, Hau Giang Boulevard, Minh
set and such neighboring areas as Bai Say, Nam A, and Lo
government force was dispatched here in the morning suc-
driving the intruders to the Lo Gom area which came under
by 1300 hours. Meanwhile, the situation in the Eighth
continued to be serious forcing allied planes to attack some
in this area.

8. The enemy tried to open a new front in the Khanh Hoi
far left untouched by the war - by concentrating his troops
Thuan Dong Village for a contemplated thrust on Khanh Hoi,
atively known as the Fourth Precinct. As soon as fighting
here, the local population once more left their homes to seek
the city.

On this Ninth day of May, the enemy also sought to open
in the village of Tan Thoi Hiep in Go Vap District but his
not have a chance against an airborne force dispatched to
way. Although fighting continued here for a full two days,
the enemy had to abandon his intention to infiltrate the city through this gate.

Meanwhile, the situation in Cholon continued to grow more serious. A look at this all important area indicates at least three major fronts, the Pham The Hien front in the Eighth Precinct where a strong communist force had been intensifying its pressure since the early hours of May 9; the Binh Tien front where the enemy had tried to occupy the installations of the Binh Tay Distilleries and the Minh Phung front where insurgent troops had sought to occupy high buildings from where they could make their presence felt.

Because of the seriousness of the situation, US troops were seen for the first time taking part in city fighting. Government Rangers supported by an armored element of the US Ninth Infantry Division counterattacked vigorously in the Minh Phung area which also was the target of gunship strafing. Many fires again broke out in this area that continued well into the night.

A few hours later around 0400 hours of the following night, enemy gunners again shelled the Tan Son Nhut Airport with over 122mm rockets.

10 May 1968. The Khanh Hoi front had grown serious during the night forcing a US armored group to take position early in the morning near the "Y" Bridge area also grew difficult necessitating the intervention of the Air Force in that part of the city for four hours. Following an all night gun battle could be heard in this area with many instances of fire breaking out.

Meanwhile in the Minh Phung sector fighting went unabated. Elsewhere, most noticeable was the collapse of the Nghe Bridge when a big armored column crossed it to enter the city. 11 May 1968. Fighting around the "Y" Bridge continued all day in the morning an element of the US Ninth Infantry Division had crossed the bridge to attack Viet Cong resistance groups in the area Pham The Hien and Au Duong Lan Streets. The infantrymen were supported by tanks and by early evening were in control of the area, relieving pressure around the La San School where a friendly unit had sought refuge. Many houses in this part of the city also continued to burn.

In Cholon, especially in such streets as Minh Phung...
Phu Tho, the situation quieted down for a while but a group moving to Binh Thoi was to meet with strong enemy in the afternoon. Bombers and helicopter gunships were immediately dispatched against the enemy in a raid that climaxed in an explosion of 700-pound bombs. By the light of flares the enemy assumed full control of the Binh Thoi area a little before dawn.

The 11th day of May was to mark the beginning of the counterattack in Saigon. It also was to be remembered by the Student Division for the protection of the capital city. With the Rangers in complete control of the Fifth and Sixth districts friendly troops launched a major attack against enemy positions on the other side of the "Y" Bridge. The fight lasted all morning but by noon the allies were in control of the situation. Victory eliminated the last communist troops fighting in the city.

At nightfall enemy gunners fired a few 82mm mortar rounds but landed in a small alley leading to Do Thanh Nhan Street. Later they also raided the highway bridge near Saigon and damaged the bridge.

The following day the situation in the capital and outlying areas returned to normal. After a week of intense fighting in the capital the following casualty figures were recorded on both sides.

A total of 2509 communist troops were killed and 221 US and South Vietnamese troops. 405 enemy troops were killed by Saigon Police and another 68 were killed by the Regional Air Forces who also took ten prisoners. In all a total of 2577 communist troops were killed and 231 captured.

Against these battle casualties the allied command reported 67 US fatalities and 333 American wounded. Seventy government officials were killed and 303 wounded while 306 policemen lost their lives. Two hundred and thirty Japanese were hospitalized. The Regional and Popular Forces of the city put its losses at eight killed and 37 wounded. Over-all casualties were 210 dead and 979 wounded.

PERIOD

In this second period there were two fronts. One was in the northern suburb of Gia Dinh while the other was in the
southern outskirts of Cholon.

North of the capital city the communist First Military Sub-Regions had directed two regiments and some troops to Saigon. The Dong Nai Regiment including Battalion K.4, and the Quyet Thang Regiment, including two battalions with the same appellations, had spread thin in their attempt to reach its outskirts. Although fighting started two days later, it be assumed the enemy did not want to initiate it so early but when his troops betrayed their presence.

As early as 23 May elements of the Dong Nai had taken advantage of loopholes in the security belt around to reach its outskirts. Although fighting started two days later, it was assumed the enemy did not want to initiate it so early but when his troops betrayed their presence.

At the beginning the enemy infiltrated some troops based in the area of An Phu Dong especially the light post of the Dong Nai Regiment and the K.3 or Phu Loi Battalion. Troops easily penetrated the area of the Tap Thanh Pagoda Seven where they waited for the main body of troops to arrive also expected to go from there to Gia Dinh Town and from Saigon's First Precinct.

But their presence at the Tap Thanh Pagoda was immediately brought about an operation by government troops, despite of a Viet Cong attempt to enlarge the battle area fight to be limited to Hamlet Seven, the Cau Son Bridge, the Bang Ky Bridge and the Cay Queo and Cay Thi sectors.

The fighting on the Bang Ky Bridge was to be the most intense of all. Government Marines quickly overcame communist resistance only to find that most intruders had left the area behind only a few small units to try to secure penetration for later reinforcements.

In the region of the Tap Thanh Pagoda the South Vietnamese airborne element dispatched to counter the communist encountered strong and determined resistance from the enemy. Insurgents had also prepared themselves for the fight and it took the government troops 13 full days to restore order in the city. It was declared pacified on 5 June 1968.

On the communist side the Quyet Thang Regiment's two battalions, Go Mon 1 and 2, arrived at the Rach Ong section to reinforce those already within the big city. They
On 5 June as the Tap Thanh front battle ended fighting to the Cay Queo area insurgents keeping as close as possible \(\text{Intense}\) troops in the rectangle made by Ngo Tung Chau, Hoang ham, Le Quang Dinh, and an unnamed street. Meanwhile, some insurgents also tried to sneak through Xom Thom to hit at various near the Joint General Staff Compound. On this front heavy forces forced the enemy to withdraw on the eleventh day of June.

As fighting died down in Cay Queo fighting immediately to Cay Thi where it became very intense. After exactly one of bitter fighting the intruders did their best to get away but they to find the undertaking impossible. Survivors of the Quyet Thang (\text{mined to Win}) Regiment surrendered en masse on 18 June 1968.

In summary the Quyet Thang Regiment was something of following the surrender of 152 members of its First and Battalions. In the words of one of the prisoners, Senior Phan Van Xuong, "The Quyet Thang Regiment had 400 men the fighting began but as of the afternoon of 17 June had only 229 left, of which 120 were wounded to various degrees".

The regimental commander, a man by the name of Ba died in the first minutes of the battle. He was replaced by the real commissar Hai Phai. Yet according to Captain Xuong, "if adds up those who had died and those who surrendered, the ning strength of the Quyet Thang Regiment can be estimated at ay or missing troops.

The Dong Nai Regiment also recorded heavy losses in course of the early fighting especially in the area of Cay Queo. particularly an element of this unit dispatched to Gia Dinh as out record incomparably heavy losses by an airborne an An Phu Dong. The remaining 250 troops of the Dong Nai had no other alternative but to withdraw to Binh My about miles Northwest of Tan Myen District Town.

In Cholon the Viet Cong Second Military Sub-Regionatched two battalions (Binh Tan Six and 308) to populated areas of the China town. When they withdrew to their Ba Vu secret for recuperation only about 100 succeeded in arriving at their nation.
During all this period enemy gunners shelled the city every night but the intensity of these aerial attacks was reduced after 18 June. After the last attack on Tan Son Nhut Airport during the night of 21 June communist gunners completely stopped these attacks on the city.

Reasons for V.C. failure

On the basis of battles recorded in the initial days it is envisioned that the enemy had wanted to open two fronts.

The first front was to have been located in the areas of the Binh Loi Bridge, the Highway bridge, the Thi Nghe Suburb, and would have given the communist control over the northeastern part of Saigon, including the downtown section of Gia Dinh and the radio and television centers. The enemy apparently had assigned a division size force for this area which included the Dong Nai Regiment, the 274th Regiment, Battalion Di An Three and Battalion Thu Duc Four.

When the attack began the intruders met with failures after failures. They failed to overcome South Vietnamese resistance at the Binh Loi and Highways bridges. Their recorded heavy losses in their first battle put them in a most difficult situation. Although they were more successful at the Highway bridge by slightly damaging it they still were not able to block the highly mobile government forces which were able to quickly and easily arrive at the Hang X and New Port areas, thus defeating the enemy's plan to occupy Downtown Gia Dinh.

All the intruders were able to do was to infiltrate a company size force in Thi Nghe where it was immediately isolated and destroyed about three days later. Following this, the enemy refrained from opening any new fronts in this general area.

Thus the enemy failed in his attempt to penetrate the capital city through its northeastern outskirts because of the failure to take the first objective, the bridge.

The second front was located in the western outskirts of the city in the area of Binh Thoi. In this direction the enemy High Command had deployed an important force including all the components of the CT. 9 Division, two artillery battalions of Regiment 208, and Regiment 697 including Battalions 267, 269 and Binh Tan Six. At one point it appeared that one battalion of Regiment 88 was also present in this area. This force apparently had come to Saigon.
The intruders were stopped the day following their initial attempt to enter the city. They did not dare enter the city during the day for fear of being decimated by airstrikes. Instead they penetrated the sprawling metropolis in small groups trying to avoid allied troops, never massing enough strength for a coordinated attack. Likewise, their outside probe was ineffective.

The Viet Cong tactics had been one to attack the city both from within with sappers and from without with regular troops. The tactic from within was to include many armed female propaganda teams. But this tactic never had a chance of materializing since all groups worked in complete isolation without the support of even a small allied force.

Since Saigon is such a large and sprawling city, the few propaganda battle was ineffective. Riot police speedily annihilated teams that the Viet Cong could muster had no impact. Thus, Saigon's western section, since interdiction artillery and possibly had prevented potential intruders from entering the city dark. Although the enemy was unable to reinforce with troops the front of Binh Thoi and Cholon expanded to a small area.

A new battle line was visible on the second day at the point of Bay Hien. Here the elements of the 272nd Regiment, 27th Division, had the task of attacking the Tan Son Nhut Airbase and penetrating neighboring areas. The intruders were caught on the element of surprise that did not exist. They had to come into town in small groups but had failed to set up among themselves. Thus without proper liaison they were to mount a coordinated attack. It was the end of the Bay Hien operation.

On the following days the enemy High Command continued to send in more troops in this area especially those that took part in the offensive, for example the Phu Loi Battalion, Battalion 808, Nha Be Five, and Battalion 265. All these units came from the south.
These units were more successful since they succeeded in penetrating some of the populous areas and were able to stay there. The reason for their relative success is attributed to the defense line maintained in this part of the metropolis.

Prior to the May offensive defense around Saigon in only ten battalions deployed as follows: the first Airborne Task in Go Vap and An Nhon, the Fifth Ranger Group in Phu Tho Hoa, Marine Task Force "A" in the area of Binh Loi and highways bridge. Within Saigon there was only the Riot Police.

Considering the few units the defense of Saigon's southern section was rather weak. The southern approach was given little attention by the allied high command. Further to the South were some deployed US infantry battalions of the Ninth and 25 Inf Divisions.

The American battalions, moreover, were strong and efficient against big enemy units. Against the many small groups of communist infiltrators the Americans could not do much. Once the Communists had entered the city, they tried their best to keep to populated areas to prevent strong allied reaction. First infiltrators were to establish some kind of bridgehead for reinforcement which together were to make a thrust against the center of the city.

With this tactic enemy troops did all they could to hold a large area west and south of Saigon. To cope with the mounting danger, the allies had to call in airpower and the intervention of ground troops. These, however, resulted in over 8,000 houses destroyed in the Pham The Hien area alone.

North of Saigon the enemy failed prior to entering the outlying areas. The 101st Viet Cong Regiment, reputedly one of the best for street-fighting, was destroyed by government airborne forces.

In summary, the second Viet Cong offensive resulted in a collapse of the morale of Viet Cong troops. It was also the time communist soldiers surrendered en masse more than once. Such famed units as the Dong Nai and Quyet Tien Regiments were completely destroyed during this phase of the attack. The battle resulted in the death of some 3,600 communist soldiers out of a deployment of some 7,000. Over 55% of the initial Viet Cong forces...
The Thi Nghe Battle (5-7 May): Fighting started in Thi Nghe when a brick carrying truck discharged its load of Viet Cong soldiers during the early hours of May 5 near the Phan Thanh Gian bridge. The intruders immediately tried to blow up a sentry post nearby with their B.40 individual rocket launchers.

Following the first attack the Viet Cong penetrated the populous end of Tu Duc Street and occupied most buildings there. They called in reinforcements. This initial attack took place at 0300 with the participation of a company size force. It was later identified as Company C.2 of the Phu Loi first Battalion.

The government troops had one company of Navy men on Phan Thanh Gian Bridge. Corporal Lam Van Mao reacted quickly to the Viet Cong presence but the Naval force was too weak to prevent the enemy from continuing his advance.

At 0415 hours a combined force of South Vietnamese Marines and Riot Police arrived and prepared to attack the VC occupied area. The enemy had had time to prepare for fighting against the advancing government soldiers. From both sides of the street the intruders directed their machine-guns against the advancing forces.

The battle began with the communists trying to expand to include the radio station and political warfare compound. They were unable to do this. Meanwhile, they had blown up the Phan Thanh Gian bridge and some houses in the vicinity. Ten persons were killed. In spite of the damaged bridge traffic was still possible.

At about the same time another Viet Cong group tried to take control of a post near the highway but policemen there reacted quickly killing one of the intruders and others along with some weapons.

In the morning of the fifth day in May the situation in that area was one of utmost confusion. While police tried to move people from moving around explosions could be heard in the Thanh Tam poultry farm. Fire engines wailed their sirens which had just been hit by mortar fire. In the
In the early hours of 5 May 1968, the Phan Thanh Gian bridge was blown up by VC agents. Some damage was reported as may be seen on this picture.

View from the side.
Tanks arriving to dislodge VC agents from some of the houses they had occupied on Tu Duc street.

From the bridge on the Bien Hoa highways, government soldiers directed their fire at VC troops taking refuge in Tu Duc street.
direction of the Binh Loi Bridge a gas station was burning sending a black column of smoke high into the sky. The people of Thi Nghe tried their best to evacuate the battle area.

The enemy reacted most carefully when the government troops attempted to tighten their noose around the VC occupied house. At times, an explosion could be heard but the intruders were not to be seen anywhere. It was in this area that Police Director General Nguyen Ngoc Loan was wounded in both legs in the afternoon. Seven of the government troops lost their lives.

The fight continued well into the dark hours. By evening it was estimated that only two Viet Cong platoons were in the Tu Duc primary school area but it was the opinion of many that they would stay there during the night. At dawn reinforcements came in the form of a ranger unit and a few armored cars. A two-pronged counter attack was made with the Rangers coming in from the Hang Xanh area and the other prong made up of Government Marines pushing in from Tu Duc Street.

Police troops also came in telling the enemy to surrender and the people to evacuate the battle zone. They were to be greeted by a few shots from the enemy but prior to the real attack silence prevailed in the area adding to the impression of awe felt by all watching the fight in this part of the city.

At 0935 two armored cars advanced slowly on Nguyen Binh Khiem Street shooting continuously at buildings bordering on street. The enemy reacted strongly forcing the armored vehicles to halt their advance. A few minutes later government rangers tried an assault on a major communist position but were thrown back.

According to Lieutenant Huynh Thien Mang who commanded the Fourth Company of the 35th Ranger Battalion the communists this time had adopted a rather good strategy. By spreading out their forces they rendered air strikes ineffective. And by occupying many different buildings, they made the tasks of government troops doubly difficult. In Mang's words "this is most visible in the troops' inability to assault a third building after successfully assaulting two houses nearby. Rangers could not dislodge the enemy from it because they were physically exhausted after climbing from floor to floor. As they dodged enemy bullets and grenades.

At 1040 hours a Ranger platoon received the order to assault the last objective. Although enemy counter fire was intense...
In support of their comrades in Saigon, Communist gunners mortared and rocketed the capital many times each night. Above is the view of an impact area in downtown Saigon.
Private 2nd Class Nguyen Van Thanh succeeded in capturing a mortar tube. This did not halt communist resistance since at 1100 hours the enemy continued to mortar the radio station and many nearby installations. The Agrarian Service of Thi Nghe and a gas station nearby were hit and began to burn.

In the meantime some communists tried to penetrate the section of Thi Nghe near the Old People's House which resulted in some fighting in the area. By night fall calm again prevailed with the communist withdrawing to the Old People's Home. The following day houses continued to burn in Thi Nghe and the civilian population continued to try to get out.

By 0700 hours that morning a Marine company under Captain Phan Van Tan received the order to mount a final assault on the Old People's Home. The fight quickly grew in intensity causing some additional fires and requiring more fire fighting equipment. In reporting about the situation Major Phan Van Thang stated that by the third day of the Thi Nghe battle the enemy had about a platoon left in the People's Home area.

Since Thi Nghe is basically a shanty town divided by narrow and winding alleys, the government soldiers had a most difficult task dislodging the intruders. Moreover, the enemy made the more difficult by resorting to guerrilla tactics that take considerable patience and time to defeat.

By 1000 hours the Marines had the area under control. The remaining Viet Cong were completely surrounded. The fighting continued until past noon resulting in ten enemy soldiers killed, ten taken prisoners, and 15 weapons confiscated.

In summary, the enemy lost 27 dead, 20 taken prisoners including several women cadre, 38 weapons of all kinds confiscated. Most remarkable was the uniform of enemy troops who wore shirts similar to those of the paratroops. Women cadre wore blue jeans.

The government side there were seven killed and two weapons lost. At least 100 civilian houses burned.

Some of the Viet Cong who succeeded in withdrawing from Thi Nghe were to meet with government Marines in the area the Binh Loi Bridge. They apparently had wanted to cross the river and take refuge at the Trung Hamlet of the Binh Trung Village some 500 yards from Cat Lai. But the enemy unit was caught by Marines who killed eleven communists and captured nine of them.
Troopers of the Seventh Airborne Battalion assaulting the French Cemetery which had been occupied by a Viet Cong force.
Houses burning at the Bay Hien intersection on 6 May.

Colonel Luu Kim Cuong, 33rd Air Wing Commander, died on 6 May 1968 trying to defeat enemy forces near the airport.

An air view of the Bay Hien area afire.
The Binh Loi Battle (5 May). The Binh Loi Bridge Battle took place at 0400 hours in the morning of 5 May when an estimated two companies of Viet Cong Troops attacked the Marine positions. The commuters were repulsed following two hours of intense fighting.

Major Nguyen Xuan Phuc who had commanded the Sixth Battalion for only two days told the press that the communists brought with them an important quantity of explosives with the intention of blowing up this all important bridge. They failed in their mission but instead lost 42 of their comrades to go-soldiers who also took 17 communist weapons and confiscated TNT.

The Second Company of the Second Marine Battalion was the unit most involved in the fighting here. According to Nguyen Van Tong the company commander, his troops had been ready to counterattack the enemy since they had only one hour themselves for the task. When the intruders arrived the Leathernecks were ready for just such an eventuality. The factor of surprise; the Viet Cong were quickly defeated.

The gas depot of Binh Loi was set afire sending into the column of smoke visible for many miles.

The Bay Hien Intersection Battle (6-7 May). During this battle enemy troops penetrated the area along some of the many Le Van Duyet Boulevard and from there entered the city. They were sighted by policemen standing guard nearby.

A few minutes later explosions could be heard which were caused by enemy soldiers trying to cut through the defense of Tan Son Nhut airbase. They failed in this attempt as they were unable to light when they started. Not only were they unable to light their explosives but they were stuck in an open area and had to occupy the vicinity in an effort to resist the advancing govt.

Attacking in this area were the airbase defense command of Colonel Luu Kim Cuong Commander of and concurrently commander of the Tan Son Nhut. Colonel Cuong was hit by enemy fire and died at about 7:30. He died his troops had been able to completely
On the other side of the airport the organic defense force of the airbase occupied a line going from the Tomb of Bishop Adran to the Paratroops Camp of Hoang Hoa Tham on Le Van Duyet and Nguyen Van Thoai Street. There were some American troops standing guard at various US installations. Along this line facing the cemetery there was a platoon of Korean soldiers keeping a watch from the Korean Radio Station they were assigned to defend. The communists were locked in a tight noose.

To complete the noose Skyraider fighter bombers arrived at 0830 hours to pound suspected VC positions in the cemetery. At about noon the Seventh Airborne Battalion under Major Nguyen Van arrived from Bien Hoa to attack the enemy. The crack airborne troops immediately assaulted the enemy position within sight of an admiring public composed of local residents and journalists from many nations.

The assault came to a quick end resulting in 60 communist dead, 11 captured, and 30 weapons confiscated. Included in this was a 75mm recoiless rifle which the enemy had fortunately not been able to use. It was also fortunate that communist troops had failed to occupy Quoc Gia Nghia Tu School from where they could have created difficulties for the counterattacking troops.

In this battle over 100 civilian houses on Le Van Duyet Street were destroyed. The Shell Gas Station at the Bay Hien Station also was set afire but the fire was put out by a big storm in the many in that season.

According to Viet Cong prisoners the enemy under an element of the 272nd Regiment (CT. 9 Division) with the task of penetrating this area for an all out attack on the Tan Son Nhut Airbase and the nearby Hoang Hoa Tham Camp of the Airborne Division, however, came too late for a surprise attack. Those that reached the French cemetery were completely destroyed while the others ran their heels in the direction of Phu Tho Hoa.

Although the battle ended in the afternoon of the 10th the government troops another day to end all resistance in this area, especially that of some Viet Cong elements taken refuge in the pilot farm of the Ministry of Agriculture on Nguyen Van Thoai Street was back to normal on 8 May.

The Battle of Binh Thoi (5-12 May): The battle area started at about 0400 hours when a 20 man Viet Cong took its appearance on Binh Thoi road in an attempt to attack
Station. As they were preparing for the task, a police riot unit on the scene and a hand-to-hand fight ensued that resulted in the death of four communists and the capture of another two. The enemy withdrew in the direction of Road 46.

Immediately an operation was ordered that at once resulted in contact with the enemy when the operating troops approached the leather factory of Phu Tho. The operating troops included the Tiger Battalion, the Fifth Reconnaissance Company, and an anti-tank group but this strong force could not advance in the face of fierce resistance from the enemy. A temporary halt was ordered when the Viet Cong were called in to support the ground fighters.

The situation appeared to deteriorate the following day of air intervention and flares illuminating the sky throughout the night. More enemy troops came in. On 6 May, enemy troops practically everywhere in the Phu Tho and Road 46 areas.

In the press on that day, Police Chief Major Nguyen Dinh of the Sixth Precinct told journalists that the communist pressure area had grown more intense.

After 50 hours of fighting, the communist battle strength increased many times substantiating the theory that they penetrated the Sixth Precinct, from where they could attack the Fifth Precinct and enter the downtown section of the city. During the "Tet" attack this communist attempt was to gain access to Road 46.

At night, however, many small groups of Viet Cong Street and killed Colonel Dam Van Quy when he was inspecting some police units near the Duy Linh Plaza, a hotel bordering on the street. Viet Cong gunners hit the two rockets that turned the vehicle upside down, killing him to be killed by an AK 47 bullet.

While, in order to block the Viet Cong infiltration of the US Ninth Infantry Division had been dislodged, where it clashed with the enemy and inflicted on both sides. A few hours later the enemy intensified his attack on the Duy Linh Plaza at the end of Tran Quoc Street to bring about the intervention of the 35th Airborne Major Ho Van Hoa and a local police force.
Minh Phung street during the May fighting

One of the many anti-aircraft machineguns taken from the enemy on Minh Phung street.
In the decisive of 9 May, soldiers of the 38th Ranger Battalion confiscated a Communist flag with the following slogan painted on it: 'We are determined to defeat the American pirates'.
The fight immediately began with Viet Cong shooting from high buildings preventing a speedy advance of the government soldiers. While the fight expanded and grew more intense, the local population did their best to leave the battle zone.

The 35th Ranger Battalion, reinforced by a M. 41 tank squadron, immediately started to fire 76mm cannons at Viet Cong positions on Minh Phung Street, which ground forces tried to assault in the following minutes. Strong enemy resistance was to bring about an intervention of helicopter gunships that by mid-afternoon were joined by four skyraiders, but the enemy continued to resist. Two anti-aircraft batteries made the task of allied pilots much more difficult.

Again a fire started spreading from Minh Phung Street which firemen failed to put out because of the enemy's devastating firepower that did not even spare the red-helmeted troops. Whole sections in the area were thus destroyed.

In the evening, enemy troops returned to Government-controlled areas. Some of them even went so far as to come to the house of civil servants and military personnel and asked to see the occupants. Apparently they were helped by informers since they often knew the residents by name. And in more than one case, the government employees were murdered before they even knew who their uninvited visitors were.

By 0200 hours of 8 May, enemy troops again penetrated the Binh Tien Bridge area causing the 35th Ranger Battalion to be immediately dispatched there as reinforcements. A fierce clash immediately developed that resulted in the intervention of three gunships discharging their rockets on VC positions in the glaring afternoon sunshine.

On Luc Tinh and Phu Tho Boulevards a group of US tanks in conjunction with the Rangers were advancing towards the target VC body littered path. Still, the enemy troops resisted by concentrating their firepower on the advancing troops. Firemen came behind the soldiers but they again were unable to put out the many fires that had been started in this area.

On two four-storied buildings on Minh Phung Boulevard, enemy antiaircraft and other big guns were located, from where the insurgents tried to stop the allied advance. A 75mm recoiless rifle was also there to stop the moving tanks.
At midnight a platoon of Rangers assaulted one of the VC occupied buildings by climbing up the gutters. This surprise attack left government soldiers the masters of a few neighboring houses on the left side of Minh Phung Boulevard.

Immediately after discovering the VC machinegun position, Rangers of the Fourth Company pushed in from two directions one of which was intended to deceive enemy gunners. The Viet Cong fell for deception and directed their fire in one direction leaving Rangers practically free access to their target. A number of well-located M.79 grenades immediately silenced the two machineguns but the 75mm cannon site was still untouched.

Fighting continued fiercely all day. The following day government troops cut the area into many smaller sections to facilitate elimination of the communist intruders and the reduction of their resistance points. While the Rangers had the houses on the right side under control, the communists kept to the buildings on the left side. A saw battle ensued with enemy and friendly troops trying to get control over each inch of land.

From a high building, a witness reported three anti-aircraft machineguns and many other weapons lying near charred Viet Cong bodies. Not far from there was an enemy occupied building which assaults had failed to secure. Air strikes again were called in. The battle grew more intense with government troops and enemy soldiers fighting for each house and running after one another in the street.

According to the commander of the 38th Ranger Battalion, Viet Cong had dug holes in walls separating the civilian houses so they could move around unobserved. Many bunkers were also made to help protect them from aerial attacks. From occupied buildings they tactically isolated by their intense fire a group of government soldiers shelling the house that harbored the 75mm gun. The government troops carried the day and captured the house. In this attack the government troops killed six communists and recorded ten wounded.

As the day moved on the fighting grew even more intense with the enemy trying to block all the alleys in the area with intense power. The situation grew hotter with each passing minute and the Rangers finally were only able to move from one house to the next by going their way around.

Government troops also came across immense difficulties trying to evacuate the 75mm cannon they had just captured. A GMC was
brought over but one of its tires was flat. Another communist crew served weapon also lay in the way.

From a multi-storied building the Viet Cong continued their fire. A tank was called in that blew up the house in a matter of seconds sending pieces and bits of Viet Cong flesh all around. But when some government soldiers tried to go in for the scattered weapons, enemy fire quickly drove them off. Finally, in order to get the 75mm gun four of the strongest soldiers were dispatched while all the fire power that could be mustered was called onto the suspected Viet Cong positions.

The Minh Phung front by that time had grown into a sea of fire from which enemy soldiers could not get away. But knowing they were now trapped, the communists resisted with the furor of men knowing they were to die. While airplanes and artillery continued the pounding of the target area, government soldiers moved in three columns against the intruders. The Minh Phung front was pronounced secure at 2030 hours of 10 May.

Following the battle it was determined that the Viet Cong suffered at least 30 dead in this area although real communist casualties may be much higher. Some were taken prisoners who declared they had belonged to the 267th battalion.

In this last decisive battle Government Rangers captured one 75mm recoiless rifle, two East German machineguns, two Chinese submachineguns, two anti-aircraft guns, one B.41 and one B.40 rocket launchers, one AK.47 automatic rifle, 12 AK.50 rifles, and a large quantity of ammunition. Most interesting was the capture of a flag with the following words inscribed on it, "We are determined to defeat the American Pirates".

The Minh Phung front had just been terminated when the 38th Ranger Battalion was moved to Binh Thoi. The troops arrived there by 1600 hours and immediately were informed by the people that the insurgents had arrived at the Phu Tho Hoa cemetery.

The Rangers immediately pushed on in two columns with the First Company trying to overtake the enemy from a southern direction while the Second Company assaulting the enemy in a frontal attack. Intense enemy fire prevented the Second Company from marching in and the second column of Ranger was also blocked in its infiltration attempt.
The communists who were elements of the 267th Battalion, the advantage of natural obstacles. They also had prepared for the battle. Half an hour afterwards the Rangers again had to call in air support which came in the form of four helicopter gunships and four jets.

At 2000 hours after the target area had been saturated with bullets and bombs, the ground troops again went in. Although heavily hit by the raids, the enemy was still quite strong and resisting vigorously. But at the approach of midnight government forces gained full control over the area.

Taking part in this battle was a company of the Viet Cong 267th Battalion the remnant of which took to their heels in the direction of Tho Hoa.

On the morning May 12th, the Rangers conducted a search in Binh Thoi. This battle actually came to an end during the morning without firing a shot.

The results of the attack on the cemetery were as follows: 12 C. were killed by body count. This did not include a number of men who were torn to pieces or charred in the paddies. Captured equipment included 5 AK, 47, one 60mm mortar, and a quantity of signal items. 2 V. were also taken prisoner. The weapons as compared to the VC in action were relatively few because many other weapons might have been thrown into the abundant streams in the battle area.

The battle claimed 2 Rangers killed and 5 lightly wounded. The stable area, the Market Garden at Rural Road 14, Binh Thoi and the Bridge Sub-precinct were totally devastated. Houses burned because most of them in the suburbs were made of palm leaves.

At enemy combat positions, dug-outs were full of straw with the floor for the troops to sit on without getting wet. Enemy holes were dug under gourd arbors. Trench slits were neck deep. When friendly aircraft flew over the VC would dive into the paddy to take cover. Their battle area was about 4 square kilometers.

**Battle of Binh Tien**

*(From May 8th to May 9th, 1968)*

After more than 2 days and nights of failure in trying to push through Road 46 and Xom Dat Street into Cholon, the Communists...
Blaze at Renault Bridge
Photo recorded on May 9th, 1968.

Blaze at Binh Tien (Cholon) on May 9th, 1968.
launched a new thrust and attempted to cross Binh Tien Bridge on May 7 at 0200 hours.

The enemy force in execution of this action into the flank Cholon was about 200 strong. Refugees flocked away but they were held on the bridge because if they were allowed to move in throns, police would not be able to control them. The police forces positioned in the buildings rolled empty drums onto the streets and set barricades to contain the flow of refugees. Suddenly another enemy force made its appearance from Hau Giang, Minh Phung Streets to establish a bridgehead for another force on the other side to cross over from there to move ahead along Hau Giang Street in an attempt to seize Cholon.

An NLF flag was hung atop a lamppost in front of Quoc School and another one at the end of the bridge. The Police force needed to seize this crossroads. One policeman while trying to bring down was seriously wounded.

Lieutenant Colonel Le Ngoc Tru, Chief of the 5th Police District came with reinforcements. At the same time, about 7 o'clock morning, the 35th Ranger Battalion also arrived to reinforce. The battalion was split into 2 columns; 1 company departing from Luc Phu Street to advance along both sides of the streets to capture the Distillery and the remaining force to move to Binh Tien Bridge.

2 armored vehicles led the infantrymen for an assault on bridge. The enemy opened up with B. 40 fire which failed to hit the force. The armored vehicles returned fire and destroyed one force and then withdrew to take blocking positions on Hau Minh Phung Streets.

The Rangers assaulted and swept clear all the VC positions, killing about 10 and capturing 4. The bridgehead set up before was at last destroyed.

At 11 o'clock, the enemy pressure decreased rapidly. They were driven to Bai Say area, Nam A Textile Plant, the Pottery end of Pham Phu Thu Street.

The Operational Command Post of the 35th Ranger Battalion was located atop a building, No.239, Hau Giang Street for better battle field. Present on the roof was Captain Dau, 35th Battalion assistant-commander directing the operation in
From atop the building looking towards the Pottery area and Binh Tien Bridge connecting Binh Dong with Cholon was clearly seen with its curved frame. Two Rangers in firing position on the roof armed with M.79 grenade launchers aiming downwards were ready to cover by fire both ends of the bridge. From time to time, M.79 grenades were launched into the opposite buildings through the windows for fear of hostile B.40's.

At the same time the Ranger advance guard continued to close with the enemy. Individual and crew served weapons were fired ceaselessly. Bullets crisscrossed and some flew in the wrong direction towards the building making hissing and whipping sounds. The NLF flag kept on flying over the Pottery area.

Requested artillery fire continued to pound regularly the Pottery area with two rounds at a time. Clouds of smoke and flame rose high in the sky following the explosions. At 1300 hours gunships came in to strike the area. The enemy held the far end of the bridge and our troops the near end. They all occupied dominating building. The gunships struck by mistake friendly positions.

At 1500 hours, the firing calmed down on both sides.

At 1600 hours the Major, commanding officer of the 3rd Ranger Battalion, flew over the enemy battle area to observe and estimate the situation. His plane was fired at from the ground. The artillery kept on firing while the blaze continued to expand with huge clouds of flames burning rows of houses 1 km long along the creek flowing under Renault Bridge. The city firemen had battled the fire since 12 hours but remained impotent in face of the gigantic whirling column of flames.

At 1900 hours the 3rd Ranger Company was ordered to cross Renault bridge. The enemy returned fire violently forcing the Rangers to pull back to the near end of the bridge. At 1920 hours they tried to assault for the second time while massing all fires on the opposite end of the bridge. This time they were successful.

Battalion Commander Ho Van Hoa ordered the NLF to tear down 3 Rangers commanded by Aspirant Pham Minh Hoang carried out the mission.

Under the light of flares and flames of the burning houses, the 4 Rangers crept to the foot of the lamppost. One of them climbed up and was about to reach the flag when he was hit and fell down to...
Friendly troops then opened fired intensely with automatic rifles at buildings where enemy snipers were supposed to be shooting from. A pole was cut down by fire and the flag went down slowly with it.

After this action, the 3rd Ranger Company continued to advance deep into the enemy battle area, passing over barricades made of all sorts. The operational force encircled the Tan Binh Tower used by the enemy as a command post the night before. To achieve this objective, the Rangers had to crawl over several roofs before entering the side door of the theater.

The enemy opened fire and killed two of the attackers who had succeeded in penetrating into the building. The attackers were unable to seize the building after engaging in a violent firefight for one hour. The Rangers remained in the building on the defensive for the night.

The 4th Ranger Company, in particular, had relieved the pressure at the Binh Tay Distillery before 1100 hours without meeting strong resistance.

On May 9th at 0830h., Captain Dau, the assistant battalion commander led two companies across Renault Bridge deep into Binh, Nguyen Van Chi, Van Than Streets to keep the situation under control and to continue driving the enemy towards Cau Kinh Bridge. No contact was made because enemy troops had withdrawn during the night. At 1030h., the operation was considered finished.

The first sight of the battlefield at Binh Tien revealed thousands of houses burned down, lampposts lying on the ground and debris of all sorts spread all over the streets. The results of the action were; 32 VC killed, 16 captured and a war trophy of 6 AK, 1 M-14 and 1 pistol.

**Battle of Tan Thoi Hiep**

(From May 8th to May 11th, 1968)

In execution of the plan of attack on the Capital, on the night of May 8th and early morning of May 9th, the 101st Regiment, 5th Division intended to infiltrate into the city through Tan-Thoi-Hiep. This move was blunted by the 5th Airborne Battalion on the outskirts of the city.

About 0130h., in the morning, enemy troops moved close to the Airborne defensive line. At first, they attacked the 5th company.
commanded by Captain Nguyen Van Dinh. Before opening up with small arms fire, they had bombarded this unit violently with five 82mm mortars. They assaulted 4 times but failed to break through the Airborne line, Captain Dinh disclosed that the enemy firepower was very powerful and consisted of machine guns, automatic rifles and also of B.40s. By 7 o'clock in the morning the enemy withdrew. The 5th company rushed forward over the line to conduct a mop up operation. 7 crew served and 17 individual weapons were captured. The 70 VC killed were left behind on the battlefield.

The 5th Airborne Battalion was reinforced with the 7th and the 1st Airborne Battalions to conduct a pursuit operation. The battle raged throughout the second day at Tan Thoi Hiep with the participation of tactical air and armored personnel carriers in support of friendly forces.

The battle was of such significance that if the Airborne defensive line had been broken through, the enemy could have penetrated through Xom Moi into the Capital along the same axis of advance they had used during Tet.

On the second day, 139 VC were killed, 5 were captured and 11 B.40, 6 heavy machine guns, 52 individual weapons of all kinds confiscated. On our side there were 21 killed and 52 wounded.

Major General Du Quoc Dong, the Airborne Division commander was always present on the battlefield and was eager to see all enemy units destroyed without leaving them any chance to escape.

General Cao Van Vien, Chief of the Joint General Staff, RVN Armed Forces also came to inspect the front while the battle was still raging. He observed the fighting in progress from the roof floor of the Thien Huong Glutamic Acid Factory only 500m from the frontline.

On the third day, the fighting took place around Giac Hoa Pagoda, 400m from the Glutamic Acid Factory where it was reported that the enemy had set up strong defensive positions.

Tactical aircraft, skyraiders and jet fighters F.105 dumped tons of bombs onto the targets. Following the air strikes infantrymen and armored personnel carriers in a combined action rushed forward onto the battlefield taking up position in the many ditches and open gardens. The surrounded enemy force still tried to resist in an attempt to fight its way out. But the encirclement ring was drawn tighter and tighter. On May 10th about nightfall the artillery fires were aimed at the remaining enemy positions.
drew a smoke screen close to the enemy defensive line to cover the final assault wave. The final assault was driven back although enemy corpses were seen piled up on the edges of fox holes and trench slits.

At night, our troops kept on tightening the encircling ring. Armed AC 47's continued strafing and the artillery pounded the enemy positions regularly.

On May 11th by noon the battle actually came to an end. The total results showed that the Airborne units had killed 32 VC, captured 9 and taken 21 crew served and 96 individual weapons. The Airborne Battalion lost 50 killed, 180 wounded and 1 missing in action. After 14 years of activation it was the first time the 5th Airborne Battalion had encountered a deserved foe namely, the 10th VC Regiment which was considered as "hors de combat" in their attempt to penetrate into the Capital.

The battle of Y Bridge
(From May 9th to May 12th, 1968)

A rather large enemy force had infiltrated into the south area of Saigon and threatened Y-Bridge area to include Pham The Au Duong Lam Streets and the area of Khanh Hoi at the other end of Thuan Bridge.

On the morning May 9th when the enemy made their appearance in the above areas, refugees from Khanh Hoi and the other end of Bridge fled in throngs into the City. On Wednesday May 9th, US moved to take positions at both ends of Tan Thuan Bridge. The going down to Phu Xuan and Nha Be was still open to traffic. US were also scattered in the Cau Hang area where many clashes took place on Wednesday starting many fires. On Ton That Thuyet along the canal the Marines of the 1st Marine Battalion held posts along the street and also in the surrounding areas.

The situation on the other side of Y-Bridge (8th Precinct) hours suddenly became critical. It appeared that the advance of the 2nd Phu Loi Battalion and the 5th Nha Be Battalion had into the densely populated areas. They intended to cross the bridge. A violent engagement occurred at the foot of Y-Bridge it was the first time US forces participated in the fighting. Support the US tanks followed by US infantrymen crossed the nightfall on May 9th. The VC had previously seized the huts of the pier of the bridge to use as a foothold to cross the bridge.
Refugees huddled across Y bridge as fighting raged on morning
May 9th, 1968

These huts were destroyed by enemy fire. The refugees tried to find cover in farmers' fields or the field of a nearby rope-tape mill, but they were caught in part of the fire when they tried to enter the base. The enemy continued to strafe the refugees from the air with machine guns, mortars, and fire from the river. They suffered many injuries and burns. The dead were found on the bridge and in the surrounding area.

The 3rd Company of the 5th Battalion was called in to assist in the evacuation of the refugees. They searched for the dead and injured and moved them to places where they could be treated. They provided medical care to the refugees and tried to keep them from catching fire on the bridge. The enemy was still firing at the bridge and the refugees were still in danger.

Fire at Pham The Hien Quay
huts were hit with bombs and set on fire. The communists took in foxholes and ditches. To dig them out Allied Forces had to rockets and spray machine gun fire on them.

While the fighting was raging at this bridge many refugees in panic tried to cross the bridge which was their only way to get the battle area. They jostled one another and some were thrown barbed wire entanglements across the road way and were ted by the fleeing crowd. It was estimated that approximately fugues were either killed or injured while crossing the bridge. ed were among those trampled by the crowd or caught in cross The flocks of refugees moving in the streets while gunships were f low were also caught in the fire and many were killed. Many running by mistake into VC firing positions were either hit by fire or killed by gunships striking VC occupied houses. Theese troops then placed timber planks on the barbed wire for thees to step over.

It was recorded that loudspeakers from aircraft had war-people to keep out of the strike zones but in this case of street s they had to escape by crossing the bridge which was their only enter the city unless they were forced by the enemy to stay on ot.

Before May 9th a combined VN-US force consisting of nd Company of the 39th Battalion, 9th US Infantry Division with tanks and the 2nd Company, 35th Ranger Battalion had set strong defensive perimeter to; protect Y-Bridge against enemy age, to prevent the enemy from establishing a bridgehead across idge and also to secure the protection of the Cho Quan power plant had been previously bombarded but sustained no damage.

The battle of Y-Bridge tapered off on May 10th. Clouds of e from fires kindled the day before still rose high into the sky. the night, the enemy intended to seize the workhouse to release of hooligans detained there and to provide them with weapons means to have more reinforcements but the enemy plan failed.

VN-US forces started to counterattack. From the direc- Y-Bridge a friendly column drove the enemy from Pham The street towards Cau Mat Bridge. The 3rd Company, 39th US ion supported by armored personnel carriers advanced deep into The Hien Street. The 2nd Company, 35th Ranger Battalion also supporting US armored personnel carriers advanced to seize the
US tanks committed for the first time in the fighting at Y bridge on May 9th, 1968.

Devastated scene at Pham The Hien market after the fighting.
Clouds of smoke from a blaze at Cau Mat bridge. Photo recorded from Au Duong Lan street on May 13th, 1968.

A quarter of Au Duong Lan street in ruins.
A dirt road leading to the small market thereby pushing the enemy toward Cau Mat Bridge. In the other direction a US force helilifted to the paddies east of Y-Bridge into an area where they could be easily destroyed by air attacks. The following was the picture recorded as US forces advanced into Pham The Hien Street.

At 10 o'clock US operational forces quietly moved along Pham The Hien Street to reach the market. They were supported by planes dropping napalm bombs on the objective.

Three armored personnel carriers were ordered to assault. One M.113 had just climbed over a high mound firing machine guns on the flank of the market when a B. 40 antitank grenade launched from the left hit the APC setting it on fire. The two other APC's had to pull back to their assault positions. The company commander then called the artillery for supporting fires.

At 1030 hours a US reconnaissance squad led by a first lieutenant bending low advanced towards the objective. They were running and firing in all directions. As they reached a brick house covered with iron sheets, the VC burst out through the doors, fired on the squad and then fled to another brick house. The doors of the 2nd house opened to let them in. Then all the VC ran out for an assault. They killed the American first lieutenant as he got close to them, the officer had thrown 2 grenades wounding some of the VC before he was hit.

At 11 o'clock dark columns of smoke rose from Pham The Hien, Au Duong Lam Streets and the bank of Rach Ong Creek. Thousands of houses on Pham The Hien Street were burned down while many people were still confined in the area.

At 1300 hours many helicopters flew in to supply friendly troops with ammunition and food. US forces continued to channel enemy troops into target areas vulnerable to air strikes. The 3rd Brigade 9th US Infantry Division commanded by Colonel George Benson also took part in this battle. Moreover, in addition to the forces fighting in the city, 1 US battalion supported by armor also conducted a search operation in the area southwest of Y-Bridge. This unit had contact with an enemy force which was on the way to reinforce the VC operating in the city.

The battle on May 11th lasted for 10 hours from 1350 hours to 2350 hours causing the enemy 85 killed. On the US side were 4 killed and 24 wounded.
On the night of May 10th a US force positioned in Lasan school had all communications cut off from the command post and isolated 200 m from Cau Mat Bridge. The enemy firepower was intense that M.113 APCs were driven back. But although the force isolated it retained its capability to fight back. The enemy from a point 30m from the school directed all its weapons on the Americans. At 1700 hours on May 11th the isolated force was relieved by combined VN-US force supported by APCs. All enemy positions in the surrounding buildings had been destroyed by airstrikes. The VC withdrew leaving behind 98 dead.

On May 11th in the daytime VN-US forces continued to clear the area of operations. In addition to the relief operation around High School, friendly troops still continued to search Pham The Luong. The battle was indecisive. In spite of air strikes in support of advancing forces scattered AK fire were still heard. When the tanks were within range the enemy launched deadly B.40 grenades. The enemy strove to hold their positions by digging themselves in. Fortified dug-outs 2m from each were lined with bricks on the inside and roofed over with sofas and mud for camouflage.

On the morning of May 12th the battle calmed down. US forces in charge of the cordon while the 35th Ranger Battalion and 9th Field Force moved into Au Duong Thanh Street for a search. 50m from the street, a sickening odor was encountered. The enemy firemen had to pull VC corpses out of debris. At noon forces had the whole area under control. All remaining VC took advantage of darkness on the night of May 11th to escape.

The damage caused to the people rose to more than 8000 destroyed. Over 400 Communists were killed in this area of operations along with 120 weapons of all kinds captured.
VC SECOND WAVE OF ATTACKS
(From May 25 to June 18-68)

Durations of operations:
- Operations throughout Gio-Dinh
  From 25 May 68 to 27 May 68
- Battle at Tap Thanh Pagoda
  From 23 May 68 to 5 June 68
- Battle at Bong Ky Bridge
  From 31 May 68 to 3 June 68
- Battle at Xom Thom
  From 4 June 68 to 7 June 68
- Battle at Cay Queo
  From 5 June 68 to 11 June 68
- Battle at Cay Thi
  From 11 June 68 to 18 June 68
The battle north of the Capital

(From May 25th to June 18th, 1968)

This battle actually started on the night of May 23rd but on May 25th did it really break out.

Since the night of May 25th the enemy had stealthily infiltrated into Hamlet 7 in Gia Dinh. They did not fire a shot. The Vung Tau police force had contact with them when they reached Van and Tap Thanh Pagodas. There was an exchange of fire. As a result, 4 policemen were killed including 1 first lieutenant.

On the morning of May 24th the population in the province was in alarm. Due to the police cordon to search for hidden enemy, Gia Dinh market was closed. Le Quang Dinh street from Bach Dang intersection to Binh Hoa intersection was also closed to traffic. Refugees from Hamlet 7 took shelter in Gia Dinh market. At 9 hours on May 24th another firefight took place in the above areas. The enemy was widely dispersed and hid in the houses in vicinity of Tap Thanh Pagoda.

The flow of refugees when they got close to Cau Bong Bridge, Le Van Duyet Street burst into the ground of the Tuberculosis Institute or lingered near Gia Dinh Information Office.

It was reported that in Hiep Binh Hamlet on the bank ofigon River there were indications of a concentration of enemy consisting of the VC Dong Nai Regiment which intended to rate into the Capital by crossing the river.

On May 24th in the afternoon, the crowd of refugees from Tap Thanh Pagoda grew larger and larger. People of all sexes huddled together trying to cross a lane which was the "No Man's Land" separating the friendly and enemy controlled areas.

At Dong Ong Co no contact with the enemy was made friendly troops began to search the area. It appeared that the scattered VC cells had escaped secretly through the cordon ring.

How strong were these cells and when had they infiltrated? According to Lieutenant Colonel Hoang Thong, Marine A" Commander, the enemy departing from An Phu Dong had
infiltrated under the cover of darkness through the gap between two outposts on the fringe of the Capital.

Prisoners of war interrogation reports also confirmed that the K. 3 Phu Loi Battalion was the first infiltrated unit. On May 25th in the afternoon Gia Dinh Police Force had another clash with the enemy in the vicinity of Quan Tam Pagoda near Cay Queo Hamlet Hoang Ha Tham Street.

Then on Saturday at midnight until Sunday early morning the enemy really made their appearance in the battle area. They seized many places such as the quadrangle limited by Nguyen Van Hoc, Le Quang Dinh, Ngo Tung Chau, Chi Lang Streets and the Lido Swimming Pool area. They broke into houses, shot at military personnel and civilians suspected as civil servants and everything moving on the streets on early Sunday morning.

The Marine "Group A" conducted immediate reaction operations. A Marine force moved into the Mortuary Lane behind Nguyen Van Hoc hospital. Another column departing from Binh Hoa Road Junction to seize the Lido Swimming Pool and the Tru Thanh Restaurant where an estimated VC Company held scattered defensive positions with antiaircraft weapons and mortars.

Another column departing from Le Quang Dinh, Ngo Tung Chau Streets moved to seize the crossroads between Tran Quy Cap, Phan Van Tri, Le Quang Dinh, Ngo Tung Chau Streets. Enemy troops were dispersed into scattered combat cells positioned in high buildings to contain the advance of our attacking forces. As they reached the corner of Hoang Ha Tham and Ngo Tung Chau Streets, a clash flared.

The friendly rear element blocking to the North on the Gia Dinh - Go Vap boundary also had scattered engagements.

After an entire day of hard fighting the Marines had killed 8 VC, captured 1 heavy machinegun and 2 AK's at Cay Thi Road Junction and the Lido Swimming Pool. The Marines had failed to drive the enemy out of this area because enemy troops had fought from fortified defensive positions organized in the people's houses. In other areas as soon as we seized one quarter of the street the VC would withdraw to another one. At the Mortuary Lane behind Nguyen Van Hoc Hospital when we tightened the encirclement the enemy moved to hold positions in Le Quang Dinh Street in vicinity of Duoc Su
Enemy troops fought to death from defensive positions organized on dangerous terrain with dense vegetation, houses built close together mixed up with tombs and graves. Photo shows friendly troops firing from behind tombs.

Paratroopers of the 5th Airborne Battalion in firing positions at a cemetery.
Pagoda. The fighting in the streets lasted for 13 hours but began to slowdown at 1900 hours. Our troops then took positions at various points to bar all enemy routes of approach.

Gia Dinh Sector announced an around the clock curfew.

At night the enemy shelled the 816th Police Field Force Special Group in Gia Dinh causing the death of two policemen while wounding ten others.

On May 27th our forces expelled the enemy from the quadrangle limited by Nguyen Van Hoc, Le Quang Dinh, Hoang Hoa Tham and Ngo Tung Chau Streets. Security was completely restored in this area.

The enemy gradually withdrew from Quan Tam Pagoda, Cay Queo, Xom Ga Hamlets to move to newly prepared defensive positions at Cay Thi, Bang Ky Bridge, Lo Voi Hamlet, Dong Ong Co and Hang Xanh Street. On May 27th in the afternoon loudspeakers of Gia Dinh Sector called for all refugees from Nguyen Van Hoc Housing Quarter, Quan Tam Pagoda Hamlet, Cay Queo, a quarter of Xom Ga Hamlet as far as Binh Hoa Crossroads to return to their homes because the situation was returning to normal.

On May 27th friendly troops had only one violent clash with the enemy positioned in a house close to Quan Tam Pagoda (Hoang Hoa Tham Street). The fighting went on until nightfall and touched off a small fire. All the 16 enemy defenders lay dead in their position. We captured 1 heavy machine gun and 4 AK.47s. On our side 2 were killed and 11 were wounded.

On May 28th the Marines pursued their operations in the area of Cay Thi, Bang Ky Bridge and Lo Voi Hamlet. Gunships had strafed these areas to prepare for the ground attack which lasted for many hours and set many houses afire.

Under the pressure of the Marines the enemy from Lo Voi withdrew to the area southeast of the Lido Swimming Pool. Another enemy group still lingered northwest of Bang Ky Bridge in an area thickly covered with trees. To avoid causing damage to civilian properties our troops were very cautious in the employment of air and artillery support.

On May 28th our operational forces consisting of the 1st Marine Battalion commanded by Major Phan Van Thang and the
Operation at Cau Moi (New bridge) area in vicinity of Long Van Pagoda (Gia Dinh) on May 28th 1968.

Scene of area in vicinity of Bang Ky Bridge. Thuan Loi timber plant in ruins.
6th Marine Battalion commanded by Major Nguyen Xuan Phuc were assigned missions as follows:

- 1 Company of 1st Marine Battalion to search Lo Voi area.
- 1 Company of the Marine Battalion positioned at Cay Thi Road Junction along Phan Van Tri Street.
- 1 Company of the Marine Battalion to block Bang Ky Bridge thereby cutting off all contact between two enemy forces.
- Another Company of the Marine Battalion to search the roadsides of Nguyen Van Hoc Street.
- The 6th Marine Battalion to block to the southeast of Binh Loi Bridge.
- Gia Dinh Police Field Force to block all avenues of approach into the city Streets.

The population in Gia Dinh had learned experiences from the previous VC attacks so everybody got ready to evacuate as soon as the presence of the enemy was announced.

On May 29th isolated hidden enemy troops were still in action. The situation that appeared to calm down suddenly became critical again.

On the night of May 30th and early on the morning of May 31st the enemy sent more troops from Rach Cng Nen area by crossing the railroad to get close to Bang Ky Bridge. It was estimated that 2 enemy battalions had succeeded in making the penetration. Subsequently, the tactical situation on the following day deteriorated.

When the Marines moved back to the railroad for an attack on the flank of the enemy force communist sappers had destroyed the fuel pipeline to the west of Go Vap. They then ignited the broken line in order to spread panic among the population and to cover the movement of more troops into Bang Ky area.

Later during the night the Marines repelled a heavy enemy attack against their defensive line. The VC regimental commander whose name was Ba Vinh was killed in this action. On our side only one Marine outpost was overrun but was quickly recaptured. The 6 defenders of this outpost were wounded.

When our troops conducted an operation behind the Duc Lam sawmill a violent clash broke out. The enemy fought from hast...
The VC were hiding in populated areas Lo Vol - Dong Ong Co - area behind the Cancer Institute, Minh Tanh monastery... The Marines were advancing cautiously into a lane where enemy troops-hiding. Photo recorded on May 26th, 1968.

Friendly troops advancing into Minh Tanh Monastery.
prepared positions. At 0745 hours gunships conducted a strike. Rockets were launched onto the targets while M. 79 grenades were detonating regularly as the beats of a drum.

The battlefield was not far from Bang Ky Bridge where two tanks were pointing their guns toward the battle area along with a small rifle unit. At 0945 hours a helicopter was shot down by enemy ground fire in Dong Ong Co. The aircraft and its crew members were quickly rescued.

At 1050 hours the enemy was driven out of the sawmill. The fighting then spread to the leather tanning plant and the fertilizer factory in the vicinity of Binh Loi Bridge.

The Marines set up a bridgehead in a house close to the fertilizer factory. This outpost encountered very strong enemy pressure but was ordered to hold ground at any cost. Our forces were divided into many columns to attack from different directions. Close air support aircraft flew over the objective and dropped heavy bombs shaking the entire area of Gia Dinh.

Another enemy group intensified their activities in a quarter of Nguyen Van Thanh Street 500m from Binh Hoa Road Intersection. Long Van and Tap Thanh Pagodas were situated in this area where there was also access routes to Dong Ong Co, Cau Son and Hang Xanh Streets. It was reported from prisoner of war sources that the enemy had infiltrated through Rach Ong Nen across the railroad into Gia Dinh during the early days of the battle.

At 1000 hours the 5th Airborne Battalion under the command of Major Vy came to reinforce in two columns.

On June 1st the battle at Bang Ky Bridge spread over 3 areas:

- Dong Nhi Hamlet (400m from Bang Ky Bridge)
- Garbage Service area (in vicinity of Gay Thi Road Junction).
- Trung Nhat Hamlet (East of POL, Ammunition Depot in Go Vap)

On the night of June 1st the enemy continued to expand mainly into the Garbage Service area in spite of 400 rounds of artillery fired into the area.