The Marines conducted an operation into the Garbage area on the following day. The enemy firepower was so intense that our tanks were only able to penetrate into the objective after 3 consecutive assaults. At 10 o'clock the situation was under control. We captured 3 VC, killed 45 and took possession of 9 AK, 6 B.40, and B.41.

After a successful fire fight at Dong Nhi Hamlet many weapons were captured. The encircled enemy pretended to surrender. We called for them to come out with loudspeakers but they held their positions. After repeated calls without results, air strikes against the objective resumed at 1230 hours.

A unit of 6th Marine Battalion supported by tanks advanced into Trung Nhat Hamlet.

At 1230 hours Lieutenant Colonel Hoang Thong announced that the enemy force was considered destroyed. The remaining task of the Marines was to mop up fleeing disbanded, disillusioned and organized enemy troops.

On the night of June 1st and early on the morning of June 2nd the enemy force was unexpectedly found to have been reinforced and capable of launching a thrust aimed at the tactical command post Marine "Group A". The attack that came was turned back. On the morning of June 2nd the Marine "Group A" conducted a sweep in the area, maneuvering with the 6th Marine Battalion in two columns advancing from Binh Loi Bridge. The second column during their advance met violent resistance 1 km from Bang Ky Bridge and 900m from the line of departure. The enemy withdrew leaving behind 11 dead, 2 AKs and 1 B.41. In this engagement 5 rows of buildings of the fertilizer plant were burned down.

The 1st and the 6th Marine Battalions swept the area northeast of Gia Dinh in two columns with the support of air and artillery. During the 3 consecutive days of operations the Marines killed a total of 531 VC captured about 100 weapons of all kinds, mostly AKs, B.40s and B.41s.

One June 3rd the battle to the northeast was temporarily in the Marine zone of action where all remaining enemy troops bound Binh Loi Bridge and Bang Ky Bridge had been killed or captured. In this area only a search operation was still in progress aimed at capturing hidden enemy elements and weapons.
In the 5th Airborne Battalion zone of action, at Tap Thanh Pagoda, big fires were still seen with huge columns of smoke and flames. The paratroopers had to revert to the tactic of moving to the objective by creeping, jumping and climbing over rows of houses to avoid enemy fires sweeping the open streets. Only after they reached the surrounding area of the pagoda did they make contact with the enemy.

This built-up area thickly covered with trees offered vantage ground to the enemy. The paratroopers did not request artillery or air support because they were afraid of causing more casualties among the people.

At night the enemy received more reinforcements and intended to take advantage of darkness to penetrate in small groups into Saigon through Cau Moi Bridge. Ten of the members of these groups were killed during their infiltration attempt.

To deal with such enemy reinforcement tactics and critical terrain features which favored the defenders the paratroopers had to call for artillery and air support. At 11 o'clock on 4 June the skyraiders struck the enemy violently. Following the air attack two Airborne Companies moved to break through the enemy defensive line but were stopped about 50m from the line of departure.

As in the previous night the enemy attempted to escape but their efforts were in vain and they lost 3 men killed in their attempt.

According to Captain Tran Van Son, a staff officer, the main intention of the enemy was to make every effort to sneak to the south i.e. to push a deep thrust into Gia Dinh. A prisoner of war revealed that his commanding officer told him Saigon had fallen into their hands. His unit was assigned the mission to relieve their victorious comrades in the city. To explain why they had been barred by the paratroopers on their infiltration route their commander said that these were but small groups of opposition forces. The same prisoner also disclosed that the committed enemy unit was Battalion K.3 of the Dong Nai Regiment and that 2 other battalions were still in this area.

On the morning of June 2nd three flights of fighters dropped ordnance on the area around Tap Thanh Pagoda. Large bombs shook the earth. Immediately following the bombing attack the paratroopers reacted.
renewed their assault but were still pinned down due to the intense fire. The 51st Airborne Company commanded by Quan assaulted 3 times but was turned back each time by enemy firepower.

Throughout the past 8 days the enemy had stubbornly resisted in this area, taking advantage of the abundant obstacles such as bamboo hedges, dense foliage and closely built houses. More importantly, they had built fortified dugouts. Therefore, defenders as well as attackers had to be on the lookout because if they exposed themselves, they could be shot at instantly. As our troops were not able to locate the enemy, more artillery and air support were again requested. Artillery had exploded only 50m in front of the friendly line. During the past 16 flights of air support over the objective had been recorded.

After 10 days the fighting was still raging in this area. The enemy continued to advance and met with more heavily fortified positions. Moreover, this area had once been a cemetery, and 50 tombs and graves were found even in front of houses. As our troops were only able to advance they continued to meet with more heavily fortified positions. Moreover, this area had once been a cemetery, and 50 tombs and graves were found even in front of houses. Artillery and air support were again requested. Artillery had exploded only 50m in front of the friendly line. During the past 16 flights of air support over the objective had been recorded.

On the morning of June 4th at 0210 hours a unit of the 86th Regional Force Battalion had sent a few days ago to be positioned in a high building (No 54, Ngo Tung Chau Street). The enemy troops were fresh reinforcements and were intent on reaching Quan Tam Pagoda by crossing Ngo Tung Chau Street. Their appearance was first revealed by Sergeant Hai, who fired 1 round of M.79 in the middle of the enemy
Chart of battle area "Cay Queo - Cay Thi"
ops, causing them to break up and spread to both sides of the street. They returned fire with AKs and B.40s then surrounded the building. The 86th RF battalion supported at maximum range with star fire. At daylight friendly reinforcements arrived meeting no resistance. Thousands of refugees huddled again into Ngo Tung Chau street.

On the morning of June 4th one enemy platoon was seen they crossed Le Quang Dinh street to reach the area behind Dai theater. While they were rushing out onto the street they were by the policemen from Nguyen Van Gap Police Station. In this fire fight 3 VC were killed and they fell with their 3 AKs the roadside. The policemen were not able to retrieve these weapons due to the intense enemy fire.

The civilian population once again left the area in haste in the direction of Giac Hoa Pagoda. Loudspeakers announced an around the clock curfew was in effect in this area.

The Marines took part in the fighting to aid the mission the paratroopers in the Cay Queo battle area. This seemed to indicate that the battle was nearing a decisive stage.

Napalm bombs were used. The axis of advance was suddenly switched to an envelopment to the flank by a combined Marine paratrooper force from west to east contrary to the axis from south north usually followed on the previous days.

Mixed with explosions of bombs were scattered detonations of small arms and grenades. Captain Son of the 5th Airborne battalion said that the enemy usually got as close to our frontline as possible to escape from being hit by air strikes.

Friendly troops advanced with extreme difficulty from morning until afternoon. The battle around Tap Thanh pagoda came to an end as the Marines seized the pagoda at 1730 hours after 13 days of fighting. However, the paratroopers continued to conduct a search around Tap Thanh Pagoda within their zone of action.

In this operation the paratroopers killed 8 VC, captured 5 and collected 10 weapons of all kinds. The Marines had 24, captured 24 and collected a booty of 13 AKs, 3 B.40s and 1.

On the following days a combined Airborne - Marine
force conducted a search in this area which was considered as secure. The paratroopers discovered a mass grave containing 56 VC corpses and had to clean up the area by removing all corpses for fear that the odor and conditions might scare away the refugees.

The total results after the battle showed approximately 100 VC killed and 8 captured with 5 AKs, 1 B.40, 1 B.41, 1 M.79 and 1 Chicom pistol confiscated. On our side, only 1 NCO was killed.

We had won this battle thanks to our disposition of troops which had blocked all enemy avenues of approach into the defensive area of the Joint General Staff Headquarters units. While enemy troops were on their way to infiltrate into the area they were challenged by an NCO on guard. They opened fire and killed the sentry. They intended to storm into the command post of a company positioned on the defensive line. Our troops then reacted in time and instantly destroyed the enemy point consisting of 5 VC. In the morning the 9th Airborne Battalion came to reinforce and conduct a search and destroy operation.

Commanded by Major Nha, the battalion was divided into different columns advancing as far as the railroad. While crossing the cemetery many bursts of AK were shot therefrom and lightly wounded 3 paratroopers. The enemy used the tombs as vantage points. Therefore, the fighting could not be ended promptly.

The 9th Airborne Battalion was assigned to search the quadrangle limited by Ngo Tung Chau, Hoang Hoa Tham and Le Quy Dinh streets. Other forces from the Joint General Staff compound held blocking positions all around.

The battalion found it difficult and time consuming but necessary to search and destroy one nest of resistance after another. 3 VC would man a position set up in a house or in a pagoda which they could fire from as snipers. Houses in this area were disposed without any plan and stood close together with dominating buildings here and there which offered vantage positions to the snipers. The capabilities of the airborne unit were not used to the maximum for fear of causing great damage to the people.

Throughout the morning of June 5th the paratroopers, in constant search for the enemy were only able to kill 2 VC, capture 1 and collect 2 AKs and 1 B.40. The battalion swept up from south to north driving the enemy out of high buildings. The repelled VC joined those positioned in Truc Lam Pagoda. Also in this morning
battalion divided the zone of action into 4 areas A, B, C and D. Areas were 120m from Ngo Tung Chau Street and were cleared.

On the morning of June 6th the paratroopers continued to push objective C where Truc Lam Pagoda was situated. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the fighting in Cay Thi area suddenly increased in intensity. The VC from their positions around Linh Son and Truc Lam Pagodas opened up with 57mm recoilless rifle and B.40 fire. Also from thick bamboo hedges enemy automatic weapons poured out deadly bursts of fire. Many paratroopers fell dead and the objective remained untaken.

The 9th company commanded by Lieutenant Tan assaulted objective 3 times but was driven back by heavy machine gun fire each time. It was the first time in this battle that 90mm guns and 81mm mortars had been used. Artillery and mortar shells unceasingly pounded the enemy positions, digging up hedgerows of bamboo by roots which fell onto the heads of the advancing troops. Following barrage of about 1000 artillery and mortar rounds, the paratroopers assaulted and were able to seize the objective at last.

On the morning of June 7th to reoccupy Linh Son Pagoda, paratroopers crossed the prolonged portion of Hoang Hoa Tham street which had been closed by the enemy for 3 consecutive days. In area trees were scorched, bamboo hedgerows uprooted, tombs castastated with large stains of blood everywhere and stinky odors sitting from debris. There were about 30 dugouts with well built trance hatches, thick timbers over the roofs reinforced with furniture and thicker cloth and on top a layer of earth. Many shells had hit emplacements without causing significant destruction. Most of them were built in a U-shape with 2 parallel vertical hatches through which the defenders could fire at the attackers. Our troops also recovered 5 AKs and a mass in which corpses were decomposing.

The battle at Cay Queo was really fantastic. The enemy destroyed in one position would appear in another.

On June 7th the presence of the enemy was reported in many places in Gia Dinh such as in Giac Hoa Pagoda area, Thi Road Junction and behind the Lido swimming pool. This appearance was an indication of another battle to take place soon.

After 4 consecutive days of hard fighting in the quadrants of Ngo Tung Chau, Hoang Hoa Tham, Le Quang Dinh streets and in
the operations to expel the enemy from Truc Lam, Linh Son Pagoda and the Bonze Rest Center, the 9th Airborne Battalion had to halt their advance and give way to the 81st Airborne Ranger Battalion which had to sweep the remaining portion of the zone of action at Duc Tin school. This unit had just moved from Nhatrang and was commanded by Major Que. The appearance of the airborne rangers meant that there had been a change in street fighting tactics to avoid damages caused to the people. Prior to their attack, they used limited support of heavy weapons but crept and rolled into the battle area to search and destroy the enemy because they were expert in close combat.

Joining the battle on the morning of June 8th, the 81st Airborne Ranger Battalion departing from the Bonze Rest Center mounted a probing attack on enemy positions in the vicinity of Duc Tin school.

The 1st company was the advance guard. Two pointmen, Nguyen Linh Kiet and Ngo Van Hoa were killed by bursts of AR fire while they were moving forward on a reconnaissance. 106mm recoilless rifles were also used to support the advancing elements. By 1400 hours after finding the exact enemy positions the airborne rangers suspended all reconnaissance missions and surrounded the objective blocking all avenues of approach.

At 1900 hours the airborne rangers started the attack by opening up with all kinds of weapons fire on the objective. 60mm mortars pounded regularly every 5 seconds. M.79 fired in salvos of 8 rounds at a time.

The firing continued for 2 consecutive hours.

All at once, all fires were lifted. So were enemy fires. In the dim light of a nearly full moon overcast by the clouds, the battlefield was shrouded in gunsmoke.

During this lull, 15 Airborne Ranger and Delta teams quietly moved on the attack, without field packs, encumbrant equipment, but carrying their individual weapons and 10 grenades. They crept silently into the objective in cells of three crawling like lizards from every direction.

About 10m from the enemy defensive positions they all jumped up together and attacked with grenades. The enemy in confused fired B.40 fire but these anti tank grenades used against panzer were not as effective as hand grenades. The enemy front line was reached and the enemy positions remained intact and intact and intact and intact and intact.
The airborne rangers and the Delta Teams then closed with enemy in close combat. A number of VC were killed, some remained confined in dug outs and others were split into 2 groups to and fired a bloody way out. At daybreak the objective was completely under control.

21 dead VC were left on the objective and 1 VC was captured. On our side, 9 airborne rangers died for the service of their country. The prisoner of war confessed that he was of the 1st battalion, Nai Regiment infiltrated 3 days before.

This was the first night raid ever conducted in the operations on the fringe of the Capital.

After seizing the objective area around Duc Tin school, airborne rangers and Delta Teams controlled only one part of the objective area 150m deep from Hoang Hoa Tham street to Le Quang street. It appeared that more enemy reinforcements were being brought in. Unexpectedly 2 Airborne Ranger companies positioned in our Rest Center were encircled by the enemy troops coming in from the northwest. Initially, at 1300 hours, the enemy opened fire on 2 high buildings, a garden thickly covered with trees slightly near the gate and from the flank of the pagoda to harass our troops. Tenant Binh then split his force into 2 elements. One from the site building opened fire on enemy positions while the other one moved directly from a corner of the pagoda towards the slightly higher site building. The VC in the second building on the flank of the pagoda joined those in the garden firing on our maneuvering element. Tenant Binh sent a third element from the corner to the north of the pagoda to launch a frontal attack on the garden. At the same time, the first column stormed into the building opposite the pagoda. VC were driven out leaving behind 6 dead. The remaining VC in the building on the flank of the pagoda.

The element attacking the garden was held off by 2 B.40s behind a tree. The airborne rangers launched 3.5 rockets on the 3 gunners on the spot. When they moved to capture the building, they found that these VC were chained together by the hands.

As to the building on the flank of the pagoda, 90mm guns were used to blow open the wall for the troops who had previously planned to assault through. The enemy fled to the other side of Tran Binh Trong street leaving behind in the battle...
area a total of 25 dead. One group of riflemen then moved close to the above street. The enemy set up in haste one heavy machine gun on a log laden truck parked on the street and poured intense fire on the advancing element who had to halt for cover. Lieutenant Binh carrying an M.72 moved forward and began to climb to a position on a multistoried house. He was spotted while taking cover behind a wall. The enemy fired a burst at the cracked wall breaking off fragments of concrete which flew all over, but the officer was unhurt. A short time later he succeeded in reaching the high part of the house and from there launched a rocket at the log truck. The heavy machine gun was hit and thrown into the enemy position below. Its gunner and assistant gunner were killed.

The riflemen then moved forward throwing grenades into the enemy positions close to the wall. But they did not cross to the other side of the street because this was part of the Marines' zone of action.

In the paratroopers' battle area, the 52nd company supported by four M41 tanks kept blocking positions within the quadrangle Le Quang Dinh, Tran Binh Trong, Ngo Tung Chau and the boundary Xom Thom (Pineapple Hamlet).

On the afternoon of June 9th, pushed from southwest by the units of the 9th Airborne Battalion into the prongs of blocking forces, the enemy massed all fires on the 52/2 company in an attempt to break through the assailants for a bloody escape route towards Bang Ky Bridge. The enemy fire was most intense at 2020 hours. The point of the mauled force was found at times 15m or 20m from our advancing elements in Tran Binh Trong street.

But when the enemy realized that they had failed to break through, they moved towards Xom Thom Hamlet.

As of 2000 hours, enemy firing died away.

On the morning of June 10th more reinforcements came into the quadrangle for a search. At noon the situation to the west and southwest quieted but to the east the enemy pressure was high. The Marines had to attack from Bang Ky Bridge to push the enemy to the south. Also on this morning the enemy set fire to houses behind Duoc Su Pagoda probably to cover their escape.

Also on the morning of June 10th the 3rd Airborne company commanded by Lieutenant Ngo Tuong Lam moved...
The enemy withdrew so hastily that they left open an area they had organized in advance for further actions. This area was approximately 10,000 square meters covered with banana trees growing as thick as a jungle along with high grass and bamboo. The enemy had built there 50 combat dugouts. Each of these had two entrance hatches opening into 2 shelters: one inside and one outside in the same way as those found around Linh Son Pagoda where a firefight between the enemy and the 94/5 Airborne company had occurred on June 7th. With such vantage terrain features and such careful preparations, why had the enemy withdrawn so hastily? That could probably be attributed to their heavy losses or to their fear to fight against the airborne rangers and Delta teams who had inflicted humiliating defeats on them through formidable night attack tactics.

On June 10th the 91st and the 92nd companies of the 9th Airborne battalion had to reoccupy the Bone Rest Center because our troops had left for operations elsewhere, the undefended center was open to enemy infiltration. The paratroopers had to fight in close quarters and used M.72's to reduce the fortified positions. Only after hours of bloody fighting did this center fall into their hands.

The battle of Cay Queo in the quadrangle bounded by Le Quang Dinh, Tran Binh Trong, Ngo Tung Chau streets and Xom Thom was considered closed since June 11th following the seizure of the above rest center.

But on June 12th, at noon, the Marines had violent contact again with the enemy in Bac Ai Hamlet 10, Cay Thi area. The first unit having contact was the 1st Co, 1st Marine battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Nguyen Van Dang.

On the same day, in the morning, Lieutenant Dang while leading his unit from Hung Vuong Housing Quarter discovered the enemy advance position behind Le Van Duyet Football Field, Ngo Tung Chau street. A violent firefight began, 3 Marines moving forward along the walls were wounded by bursts of AK fire. The enemy strength in contact was about one platoon positioned on the outer perimeter.

Some fires were touched off at 10 o'clock by crisscrossing bullets.
On evening June 16th Airborne Rangers wearing masks moved into Cay Thi battle area where tear gas canisters had been dropped.
The 1st Marine Company continued their probing attack. The enemy opened up with all kinds of weapons fire such as heavy machine gun, B.40, 57mm recoilless rifle etc... The military assumed that at least 200 troops must have held this area. This force was of the Quyet Thang Regiment.

During an operation conducted by the 2nd Marine Battalion, a group of VC of the Dong Nai Regiment came out to surrender at Hang Xanh, Cau Son. As a result, this battle area became calm.

On June 13th the battle at Cay Thi was in full swing. Enemy troops overran Phan Van Tri street and the far end of Ngo-Tung Chau street. They massed the most troops in Hien Vuong Housing Quarter, Le Van Duyet Athletic Field and the area behind Lien Ung Pagoda.

Since the afternoon the Airborne force consisting of the 8th and the 9th Battalions had been taking up blocking positions while the Marines launched a deep thrust into the objective. The VC dug in behind Lien Ung Pagoda to prepare for a tenacious defense.

On the morning of June 14th the Marines pulled out far enough for the artillery to bombard the objective. The shelling continued for 10 hours. As the artillery fire lifted the Marines resumed the attack. The enemy in fortified positions set up in houses and gardens returned fire violently. By nightfall the battle remained indecisive on a front extended from Xom Ga Hamlet as far as Cay-Thi Road Junction.

At night the Marines withdrew to hold blocking positions to the South and to the east of the battle area.

On the following morning of June 15th at 0630 hours 3 Airborne Ranger Companies moved in from southwest of Ngo Tung Chau street to replace the Marines who pulled out to take up blocking positions. The Airborne Rangers prepared to launch a thrust to the northeast aiming at destroying the enemy force positioned in the area.

The clashes were atrocious during the day. To avoid causing heavy casualties and damages to the people Prime Minister Tran Van Huong had forbidden the use of air and artillery in built up areas where refugees were huddled. Therefore, friendly troops found it difficult to destroy the enemy forces, since they had positioned themselves in these built up areas for 4 to 5 days and had taken advantage of this time to dig strong emplacements and trench slits.
The Airborne rangers had violent contact 100m from the line of departure in the vicinity of the textile factory at Xom Ga roads. The four VC manning this advance position were killed.

At 8 o'clock 106mm recoilless rifles had to be used. After the fire lifted the airborne rangers moved into the attack but met only weak resistance. At 0810 hours all the Delta teams under the command of Major Phan Van Huan advanced to seize the high buildings in the zone of action. At 0825 hours another Airborne Ranger unit had violent contact on the grounds of Buu Lang Pagoda. At the same time the first column reported that they also were having contact with some resistance nests. Later on the third column was also engaged in a fight inside a building. They later reported that a wounded VC was captured as prisoner. At 0950 hours the enemy from a position 50m from the Air Ranger Command Post launched a B.40 rocket wounding a US Major advisor to the airborne rangers and a UPI reporter. At 1045 hours a machine gun manned by the airborne rangers and positioned 50m from the VC defensive line destroyed a hostile B.40 in a building. The VC gunner was killed on the spot. The remaining VC returned fire with a B.40 wounding 3 more airborne rangers severely. Then they set fire to a house next to the building assault by our troops. Before withdrawing, the VC from a nearby garden launched four consecutive B.40 rockets wounding 5 more among which was an Armed Forces photographer whose name was Nguyen Van Cau.

The battle at Cay Thi was on the 4th day although after 3 days of hard fighting the enemy had lost 23 dead by body count and a number of others buried in caved-in dugouts.

On the afternoon of June 15th the battle tapered off. The airborne rangers conducted another night raid. As it became dark 6 Delta Teams commanded by Lieutenant Tu Ba Tho and supported by the 2nd and the 3rd Airborne Ranger Companies split into 2 columns to penetrate into the battle area.

But when the above columns had crept into the enemy line for about 30m a flare fired from Bang Ky Bridge revealed their position. Then the clash erupted. Also, thanks to the flare the Delta Teams were able to discover in time the VC positioned in a house. They quickly launched a 3.5 rocket which blew in the house killing all its occupants.

Some time later the Delta Teams and the Airborne Rangers pulled out. During the raid friendly and enemy troops were so close together that grenades frequently had to be used.
Also in the previous night the enemy had made probing attacks for routes of withdrawal through Phan Van Tri street and in the direction of the railroad but these attacks were turned back by Marines.

On the morning of June 16th a VC came out to surrender. He said that he was from the K.2 Quyet Tien Battalion. His unit had moved from Bung Long to Gia Dinh with an estimated strength of 300 men. He also disclosed that the K.2 Battalion consisted of five companies. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd rifle companies, the reconnaissance company and the communications company. He was from the signal company composed of 24 personnel but at this time only 14 were available. Also according to him an estimated 150 VC in civilian clothes armed with powerful weapons had been instructed to hold fast in this area and withdraw only under favorable conditions. His company commander had been wounded the day before and Bang Tai the battalion commander whose finger had been cut off by a bullet was still in command and had ordered the unit to fight to the death.

On the same morning Major Que the 81st Airborne battalion commander sent the 3rd Airborne Ranger Company to replace the Delta Teams which were assigned to reinforce the 1st and 2nd companies preparing for another battle.

All morning long bursts of fire were heard but these were from probing clashes. At noon 2 tanks were directed to take positions at Lane 143, Ngo Tung Chau street and on the flank of Phuoc An Pagoda to fire on enemy positions. The VC returned fire by shelling one and forced them to pull out. Some time later 3 US tanks and a bulldozer blades took up positions by the side of the 2 RVNAF tanks and awaited orders.

At 1600 hours tear gas canisters were dropped on the enemy positions but while the gas was being dropped from the air, a sudden strong wind blew the gas towards Go Vap. The enemy was slightly affected but the population around the battle area suffered most.

Tanks and tear gas were all ineffective so the airborne fighters had to revert to night attack tactics once again to deal with the situation.

The 2nd and the 3rd Airborne Ranger Companies silently crept into the battle area. They made contact with the enemy at 0325 but only met with light resistance.
At 0400 hours these units seized the entire objective and even reached Ngu Hanh Temple and got close to the gate of Hiep Vuong Housing Quarter I. 17 VC were killed during the attack, 3 B. 5 AKs and 1 pistol were captured. These weapons were either burned or bullet riddled.

On the morning of June 17th, a captain, the assistant commander of the Quyet Thang Regiment, whose name was Phan Van Xung surrendered and revealed that the enemy had withdrawn to the Nam A textile plant leaving behind but one small unit to fight in a delaying and diversion action. This surrendered high ranking officer also disclosed that the enemy probably still had an estimated 230 men on hand but only 120 were fit for combat while the remainder were wounded.

So this mauled unit about 200 strong had attempted to escape through the encirclement under the cover of darkness. At about 0100 hours they moved to the steel railway bridge to withdraw in the direction of Hiep Binh Hamlet. One should remember that on the day before an element of the Dong Nai Regiment had intended to reinforce the encircled Quyet Thang Regiment but when it reached An Phu Dong it had been smashed by the 3rd Airborne Battalion leaving behind 100 dead.

While the enemy unit got close to the steel bridge it was fired upon by the 6th Marine Battalion positioned there and was forced to pull back to Bang Ky Bridge where it was met by the 1st Marine Battalion which pushed it back to the cemetery around Giac Quang Pagoda.

At 6 o'clock, Major Phan Van Thang, 1st Marine Battalion commander was personally in command of the 2nd and 4th Marine companies to conduct a cordon and search operation in the area.

Many clashes were reported. The Marines killed 5 VC, captured 2 and received 1 surrendered VC.

The surrendered VC whose name was Ho Van E and was a native of Binh Duong Province, disclosed that while withdrawing from Cay Thi, the Quyet Thang 1st and 2nd Battalions had joined together to move through the burned area behind Cay Thi Market. They had crossed the road junction, taken over in the surrounding houses where they awaited darkness. After which they were to follow the previously attempted route of withdrawal in the direction...
Area in vicinity of Giac Quang Pagoda cemetery where survivors of VC Quyet Thang Regiment had surrendered in mass.

A Marine searching one of the dug-outs around Giac Quang Pagoda.
of the steel bridge over the river and the 502nd Marines.

He said that 200 street fighters were arrested for two days. Some came to the people's house and asked for food. They all were shot in the stomach, and there were no survivors.

At 6:00 p.m., the VC surrendered. The 502/50 Commando units were ordered to cease fire and returned.

On the same day, VC Captain Phan Van Xung surrendered to the 502/50 Commando units. He said that his men began to rally by the end of the day. They were all captured by the military.

Late in the evening, the VC regiment committee was captured in the area. It was composed of ten B40s and ten B40-equipped units. The VC troops surrendered.

By 7:00 p.m., the VC surrendered in the area. They captured 17 VC individuals and one VC with a gun. The military spent two days in the area. The VC surrender captured 29 VC troops.

By 9:00 p.m., the VC surrender of the 502/50 Commando units was crowned with a military victory, which was the highest number of VC surrender in Viet Nam. The military in North Vietnam had lost the battle at first, but a massive strike of the Republic of Viet Nam finally broke the VC troops.

152 VC surrendered in Gia Dinh on June 17th, 1968.

Surrendered VC troops and cadres embarking on trucks.
In this escape attempt they were halted by the steel bridge. He also declared that these defeated units were approximately 200 strong. All were exhausted and had been short of food for many days. Some days before, they had still been able to get food from the people's houses but since 2 days ago they had found nothing. They all wanted to rally but were afraid that our troops might mistake them for the enemy.

At 0930 hours Major Thang ordered all operational forces to cease fire and to shoot only when necessary to let the Polwar team call the enemy out to rally.

On June 17th in the afternoon the rallied officer, former captain Phan Van Xuong called to his comrades in arms to come and rally. They still stayed behind in the Cay Thi battle area.

Later in the evening while the recorded voice of Captain Phan Van Xuong was being transmitted from the air, VC troops rallied by groups of 5, 7 or more than 10.

By the end of June 18th 152 VC of the Quyet Thang Rest committed in Gia Dinh battle area had rallied to the Marines 1st Battalion and had delivered many AKs, one 60mm mortar, 10s, ten B 41s, documents, and a large quantity of ammunition.

During the clash on June 17th in the afternoon, 1 km to the west of Gia Dinh, 30 VC were killed. The Marines also captured 29 individual and 16 crew served weapons. Also during the same period, in an area near Cay Thi road Junction the Marines killed 31 VC, captured 29 individual and 16 crew served weapons.

By then the operations to the north of the Capital ended, and with a mass surrender of 152 VC troops and cadre. This was the largest number of troop to surrender in the history of the conflict in Nam. This event caused agitation in the opinions of the people of Vietnam. The North Vietnam Government refused to admit failure but ascribed it to a fake event invented by the government of Vietnam. This denial was merely a measure to the North Vietnamese anxiety and the decaying morale of the troops.
The battle of Cholon

(From May 27th to June 7th, 1968)

Two days following the attack on Gia Dinh on May 27th, 1968 another battle erupted in Cholon.

Initially, the enemy harassed Cau Tre area Rural Road 14. At night, they penetrated into Phu Lam A housing Quarter where all lines of communication from the Delta provinces meet. The occupation of this point suspended all traffic along the portion of the highway from Phu Lam Quay to Hau Giang - Phu Dinh Crossroads during May 27th. The 38th Ranger Battalion and 2 companies of the 2nd Marine Battalion were sent to the battle area. Supported by gunships and armored personnel carriers, they reoccupied the above Housing Quarter at 8 o'clock on May 27th. In the afternoon traffic was moving again. However, cargo trucks were escorted by police forces into the city. On hearing the firing of weapons the people in Cholon suburbs still haunted by the last event huddled together to take refuge. However, many still stayed in their houses to protect their properties against possible looting. In the afternoon many fires were seen with clouds of smoke rising from Phu Lam A Housing Quarter. Many fire engines had come since the morning but could not get close to put out the fires.

The Marines of the 2nd battalion withdrew again from Phu Lam A at nightfall to take positions in Hau Giang street. Two of the battalion's companies were still retained for operations around Giap Vap.

Therefore, during the night, the enemy took advantage of the undefended area by penetrating and reoccupying the Phu Lam A Housing Quarter. They used it as a base from which to launch attacks on the two companies of the 2nd Marine Battalion positioned in Giap Giang street.

Due to insufficient strength these companies had to
small groups setting up holding positions in high building and
leading along a 3 km long front. A company of the 38th Ranger
Battalion came to reinforce at 5 o'clock in the morning. The Rangers
the Marines then conducted a combined mop-up operation but they
were delayed in their advance by violent enemy fire directed from
mop-up areas. In the afternoon, they reached the above Housing
Quarter but pulled back once again at nightfall. So the battle front
remained unchanged. This was the third time that fighting had occurred
in this small corner.

On the fourth day of the battle i.e. on May 30th, the 38th
Ranger Battalion launched a flank attack on the objective which was
the Phu Lam A Housing Quarter. Their line of departure was from
Binh Bac at Phu Lam Bridge while the 2nd Marine Battalion now in full
strength led the frontal attack from the city. The Marine Command
was stationed in a multistoried house 150m from Phu Dinh - Hau
Crossroads.

During the night, the enemy rot only remained in Phu
A but also occupied the Cong Thanh Garage at No 704, Hau Giang
street. After a firefight for more than 2 hours, this garage suffered
heavy damages. Inside, large stains of blood were seen but
enemy had departed.

The Eagle Dry Battery Factory near the Cong Thanh
Garage was hit with all kinds of explosives and was heavily damaged.
Attacks to seize this objective claimed 3 Marines killed and one
killed by the first enemy burst of fire. Only in the afternoon were
able to maneuver and fire on the factory. The enemy still
stubbornly so air strikes were later directed to eliminate
Defenders. A big fire was touched off.

Phu Lam A Housing Quarter was also seized during the
strenuous efforts because the enemy had delayed the advance
troops by fighting from dominating buildings along Hau Giang
A. 10 VC of the 6th Binh Tay Battalion and the 308th Battalion
captured. They disclosed that in execution of the plan of attack
units were dispersed in teams of four to man positions in domin-
y buildings and were ordered to fight to the last man.

On every killed VC body was found a 3 point order to
implement the plan of attack. These points were as follows:

1. Only 1 squad is to be used to attack a police station.
Clouds of smoke from devastating fires in Phu Dinh area on the afternoon May 30th, 1968.

Around the clock curfews were applied only for definite areas. Curfew limits from Dong Khanh Street into Cholon were indicated as two signs shown above.

battalion concentrating into the Phu Dinh. In Phu Dinh, The Ranger battalion concentrated towards the adjacent command post at Dong Khanh Street to block the enemy. Around the clock curfews were applied to stop the enemy from entering the city through the Cholon during the Dinh Ho, Thanh Ly in their hands. A guard made many occupied many points at Renault branch office and Cholon office.

Police Field grade enemy. Colonel was the front to direct the unit moving. Enemy appeared in Thanh Ly with the enemy's position. Enemy at the front position when Binh Tinh.
B.40s should be used as much as possible.

2. Do not move along lanes to avoid getting lost. Cling to people's houses. Use force, as required, to secure the secrecy of troop movements.

3. Apply the motto: when wounded, prompt evacuation, if killed, prompt inhumation.

On the afternoon May 30th Major Bang, the 38th Ranger commander, discovered that many enemy groups were infiltrating into the city from the direction of the Coconut palm garden in Dinh. In spite of interdiction fires the enemy kept on sneaking the Rangers counterattacked. At 4 o'clock in the morning, the Ranger commander personally led 2 companies creeping silently on the enemy and ordered Captain Nghenh, the battalion assistant commander to maneuver the remaining companies into Phu Dinh to block the enemy route of withdrawal. All at once the enemy fired. A violent clash ensued. The Rangers totally won this battle against the enemy about 100 dead. One 82mm mortar, four 60mm mortars, three heavy machineguns, two AKs, one B40, one B41, and 16s were captured. But the enemy succeeded in infiltrating into the city though. A rather large number of them had sneaked into Cholon the night. The quadrangle limited by Truong Tan Buu, Pham Ho, Thap Muoi, Phu Dinh Streets in Binh Tay area was completely in their hands. They had penetrated late at night. The policemen made no reaction at all when the VC appeared in the streets, occasioning many dominating buildings and isolated the Marines positioned on bridge. Scattered VC groups also appeared at the Post Cholon railroad station on Tong Doc Phuong Street.

The 30th Ranger Battalion, one Marine company, and two Field Force companies were sent to hold the advance of the 2nd Marine Battalion. Colonel Tran Van Hai, the Ranger commander went right to direct the operations.

All traffic to the Delta provinces was delayed.

One company of the 38th Ranger Battalion adjacent to the 2nd Marine Bat-2

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On the afternoon of May 30th, 68, supported by armed helicopters and tanks, Marines were attacking enemy troops positioned in the Eagle Battery Plant.
Our relief forces then moved into the battle area while a force consisting of policemen and personnel from Cay Intelligence School were positioned all along Mai Xuan Thuong Street from the intelligence School as far as Nhi Thien Duong Bridge. The left was Dong Khanh Street, to the right Hong Bang Street and further outside Tong Doc Phuong Street, everything was guarded by Rangers and the policemen.

The civilian residents in the battle area had been warned to leave their homes prior to H. hour by Colonel Tran Van Hai through a loudspeaker. He also at the same time transmitted the order of the General, Chief of the Joint General Staff urging all troops to respect the people’s property. Some prisoners of war were also asked to call out to their comrades to lay down their arms. At 1030 the operational forces started their advance. A column depart from Tong Doc Phuong - Nguyen Trai Crossroads moved down road. The enemy returned fire promptly in Tong Doc Phuong street but our troops gradually drove them to Phung Hung Street. The enemy had opened case-like holes through the walls of the buildings. Such tactics proved to be effective. We had to use M.79 case launchers and 57mm recoilless rifles to reduce hostile positions one by one. Phung Hung Street suffered rather heavy damages, particularly at the textile market and the area lying between Nguyen and Dong Khanh Streets.

Early in the afternoon the enemy pushed close to Ly Nguyen Street. Many violent engagements broke out. Ten VC on the battle area.

Another police force advanced along Hau Giang and Phan Streets under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Le Ngoc within supporting range of heavy machine guns cal.50 mount. Some policemen fell dead under intense enemy fire.

In the morning, many Skyraiders flew in to provide air support. Many fires broke out in New Cholon at noon. The firemen had extinguished the flames, saving in time the rice depots. Fighting was still raging.

The situation at Phu Lam A calmed down as the battle drifted into Cholon. We had completely gained control of the Housing Quarters, Rural Roads 14 and 15, Road 46 and Hung Street in Cholon.
A wounded VC being evacuated out of Phu Lam A area of operation by the Rangers.

The 2nd Marine Battalion war trophy collected during the operations at Phu Lam A.
Houses in this area were devastated by the fire. Black, decomposing charred bodies emitted stinky odors. The firemen had to wear masks and rubber gloves to pick up corpses and load them onto trucks for burial elsewhere. Added to the ruins were scattered civilian and military vehicles.

On June 1st, hearing that the situation was improving, refugees began to return secretly to see if their homes had been damaged. In total, 283 were killed by body count in this area. The Marines captured 7 crew-served and 40 individual weapons. On the enemy side, 13 were killed and 63 wounded.

One of the Marine heroes was Corporal Le Thanh, 27. He and three other Marines were left on the roof of a building on Hau Giang Street without contact with their unit for 40 hours, but Thanh himself achieved a record, killed 20 VC although he had been wounded in the chest.

Also on June 1st the rangers and policemen repelled the enemy as far as Ly Thanh Nguyen Street. But as darkness came the enemy had to pull back. The VC once again took advantage of darkness and the undefended area to return to hold positions in the buildings. They pushed vehicles in the streets to set up barricades.

On Sunday morning at 7 o'clock the operational forces marched again into the battle area. Clashes followed. In Khong Tu Street the enemy pressure was the heaviest then around Ly Thanh Nguyen and Manh Tu Streets. The Communists organized defensive positions in the buildings from the Nghia Xanh Motorbike Import to the old Delta bound bus station.

Their fire was so violent that heavy tanks had to be called in. The fire was touched off. Many wounded VC were burned alive in burning flames.

In the afternoon the enemy pressure was still heavy in Khong Tu Street. Gunships came to strike at assigned targets. At that time the sky clouded over with scattered drops of rain. A US helicopter flew in from the left of Khong Tu Street and launched a rocket which pierced the wall on the second floor of Phuoc Duc High School at No 226 Khong Tu Street and exploded on the entrance steps. Immediately following the explosion of the rocket, the helicopter hovered around to strafe with machineguns. Colorful smoke was set off to signal friendly positions. The helicopter flew away.

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Rangers of the 38th Ranger Battalion moving into devastated Phu Lam A Housing Quarter. Photo recorded on May 29th 1968.

An enemy combat position in Phu Lam A Housing Quarter.
The rocket and the machinegun bullets had hit the Ope­
Command Post and killed many high ranking officers. These
were:

Lt. Colonel Nguyen Van Luan, Director, City National Police.
Lt. Colonel Le Ngoc Tru, Chief, Saigon 5th Police Precinct
Lt. Colonel Dao Ba Phuoc, 5th Ranger Group Commander
Lt. Colonel Pho Quoc Chu, Director, Saigon Port Directorate
Lt. Nguyen Ngoc Sinh, Assistant Director, City National Police
Lt. Nguyen Bao Thuy, Chief, City Security Service and brother
of Lieutenant General Nguyen Bao Tri.

Other high ranking officer more or less severely wounded
were:

Lt. Van Van Cua, Mayor of Saigon, with fairly serious wounds.
Lt. Colonel Nguyen Van Giam, Capital Military District Commander with
light wounds.
Lt. Colonel Tran Van Phan, Assistant Director General,
General National Police with an amputated leg.

The location of the incident was only 150 meters from
the line of contact. This disastrous and important event had stirred
strong emotion among the political circle. Although it was an acci­
dent, doubtful rumors still ascribed it to a liquidation.

The battle of Cholon was in the fourth day. The situation
appeared to be more critical. The enemy had opened cave - like
holes through the walls to spread their forces throughout the area. 
Therefore, the battle was no longer limited to any distinct quarter
but on the contrary isolated gunfights were heard everywhere.

On June 4th, in the afternoon, tear gas canisters were
dropped from the air. Immediately following the expansion of the gas,
the 30th Ranger Battalion in coordination with the policemen all wear­
ing masks moved in but were able to gain control of only a few places.

Tear gas was of little effect because when our troops
approached the enemy could still fire on them as effectively as ever.
It is said that they were also wearing masks. But in reality they
covered their mouth and noses with water soaked rags or cloth to
breathe through as the gas spread to them.

Just at nightfall our troops withdrew to their initial
locations. After which the enemy moved up to reoccupy their previous
positions. The battle area remained unchanged after the night.
Hole opened in a wall of Phuoc Duc Private High School by a rocket launched by mistake from an armed helicopter.

Photo recorded on June 2nd the preceding day of the firing incident, showing Operational Command Post Key members accompanying Lieutenant General Le Nguyen Khang, Commander of operational forces on an observation tour of battle fronts. Front row from left to right: a Ranger Captain, LTG Le Nguyen Khang, LTC Von Luan, Colonel Nguyen Van Giam. Next row right behind the General were LTC Dao Bo Phuoc, LTC Le Ngoc Tru.
The 30th Ranger Battalion moving in Pham Dinh Ho Street (New Cholon) on afternoon May 30th, 1968

Captured VC in Cholon
Also on June 4th the 35th Ranger Battalion commanded by Major Hoa was ordered to replace the 30th Ranger Battalion that had been fighting for 6 consecutive days. After just arriving on the battlefield one company of this battalion was immediately assigned the task to hold blocking positions in Hong Bang Street because the enemy was reported to have extended their defense in that area. Many buildings were in enemy hands to include the one where the Chinese Chamber of Commerce at Phung Hung - Hong Bang Crossroads was located.

On the morning of June 5th the 35th Ranger Battalion supported by M.41 tanks was split into 2 columns. The force was to depart from Khong Tu Street and advance into the zone of action which was then divided into 2 objectives.

The 1st objective included Khong Tu, Ly Thanh Nguyen, Manh Tu and Hoc Lac Streets.

The 2nd objective included Nguyen Trai, Phung Hung, Hong Bang and Ly Thanh Nguyen Streets.

The 1st objective was considered captured at 1135 hours. The Soai Kinh Lam Restaurant which had been in the hands of the enemy for many days was reoccupied. The tanks were reassigned to support the attack on the 2nd objective which was seized at 1300 hours. The rangers continued to search the area. A new order was given this day. The employment of air and artillery support would be limited to avoid causing injury to the people. This new order came from General Nguyen Van Minh the newly assigned commander of the Military District who replaced Colonel Nguyen Van Giam. The order was effective as of 1000 hours June 4th 1968. But actually, the enemy force was no longer a significant threat and consisted only of isolated nests of resistance. Tank gunfire and recoilless rifle fire were used to destroy the remaining VC some of which were still fighting desperately from scattered positions.

On the morning of June 6th one company of the 38th Ranger Battalion was assigned as reinforcements with the mission to deny all other enemy infiltration into the city while the 35th Ranger Battalion continued to conduct search operations. The VC were able to pursue the resistance in some buildings on the left of Dang Khanh and Hoc Lac Streets in front of Father Tam's Church. By 10 hours this enemy 10 man-group was eliminated. All were killed. In other areas 30 VC bodies lay scattered here and there.

A few isolated elements were still firing because...
Soai Kinh Lam Restaurant on fire

...and after the event
were forced to fight to the death within our tightening encirclement. Many others from disorganized units fled for hideouts located within this area. At 1000 hours 10 VC came out to surrender. Among them were one woman and two men all of which were Chinese born cadre. They declared they were of the 6th Battalion infiltrated from Phu Lam.

In total on the morning of June 6th in particular we captured ten B.40s and B.41s, one M.79, 2 carbines, 38 AKs, and 6 automatic rifles.

At night the enemy made an attempt to escape. From the direction of Father Tam's Church 8 VC were killed by the 6th Precinct Policemen in front of the Asia Restaurant. Also during the night the Rangers killed 10 other VC in an ambush while they were running from Tong Doc Phuong Street to the 8th Precinct.

But on the night of June 6th and early morning of June 7th, a large group of VC disguised as Marines and Field Force Policemen infiltrated into the area at the end of Bang Ky Bridge and the Truong Van Ben Soap Company on Kim Bien Street. In the morning, our troops returned to search Father Tam's Church area. Also on this day the Ranger Command transferred the entire 38th Ranger Battalion from Phu Lam to replace the 35th Ranger Battalion leaving the zone of operations for rehabilitation. The newly arrived battalion was commanded by Captain Nghenh acting Battalion Commander and was split into 2 columns; one composed of the 1st and the 2nd Companies came to relieve the 35th Ranger Battalion for further operations in the quadrangle Tong Doc Phuong - Hoc Lac. The 3rd and the 4th Companies were sent to restore security at Ba Cang area. It accomplished its mission by destroying an estimated VC platoon still straggling on Van Tuong, Go Cong, Ngo Thanh Tinh Streets.

In the morning the National Police Field Force repelled the enemy from their defensive positions in the Truong Van Ben Soap Factory and killed about 30 VC. The factory was severely damaged and 4 VC rallied and 2 were captured on Go Cong Street.

The Ranger column departed from Khong Tu Street via the Soap Factory to the corner of Van Tuong Street. Many isolated clashes broke out on their arrival. Immediately the Rangers captured the buildings and Palikao Bridge (Ba Cang) situated on the corner of Go Cong, Ngo Nhan Tinh Streets. From the corner of Van Tuong and Trinh Hoai Duc Streets to the bank of the creek on the other side of the swampy area the VC were firmly entrenched in their position.
On June 3rd, tanks were maneuvering on the streets to support infantrymen in their advance into the objective.
Devastated quarter in Tran Thanh Can street.
Photo recorded on June 3rd, 1968

Clouds of smoke and flames from a blaze at the end of Dong Khat street on June 3rd 1968
War destruction scene in Khong Tu area.

The 35th Ranger Battalion supported by tanks in an attack on buildings on Nguyen Trai - Phung Hung streets.
The Rangers in an attack to seize Ba Cang bridge. Photo recorded on June 7th, 1968

A firefight at this bridge had burned down all slums along the crest.
Last cordon and search operation in a devastated street.

Desperate enemy troops and cadres leaving the battle area to surrender. Photo recorded in Cholon on June 7th, 1968.
the Rangers. The policemen of the 5th, 6th and 8th Precincts pressed
the enemy into a quarter of Nguyen Van Thanh Street. The firefight
lasted from noon till dark and burned down all the huts along the side
of the creek.

Also on this day the column of the 38th Ranger Battalion
operating on Tong Doc Phuong and Hoc Lac Streets added 4 more VC
killed and 3 AKs, one B.40 captured.

The VC troops and cadre who rallied or were captured
in Go Cong Street declared that they belonged to the 308th VC Battalion
except 2 who were from North Vietnam. They had infiltrated from
Long An into Cholon since May 28th. One of them revealed that they
had infiltrated from Long An into Cholon since June 7th. This indicated
that these VC fighting in the Truong Van Ben Soap Factory were from
a recently committed unit.

During the night the Rangers continued to surround the
areas in Khong Tu, Go Cong, Ngo Nhan Tinh, Van Tuong Streets.
VC were "cut up" into small groups and isolated from one another.
Their fighting became disorganized and desperate since they knew
they had no hope of finding a way out.

On the morning of June 7th when the 4/38 Company was
searching in this area the first of 17 VC surrendered in Khong Tu
Street with two B.40s. 20 minutes later another 13 VC laid down
their weapons in Go Cong Street. The prisoners were then allowed to
call among whom was one woman cadre. Most of them were natives
from Vinh Long and Tra Vinh and belonged to the 6th and 308th VC
Battalions. They also disclosed that their commander had lost control
of them 2 days ago. The commander did not know whether they were
still alive or not. The 308th Battalion Commander had been
wounded in the head some days earlier.

After this surrender of VC troops and cadre the battle
of Cholon ended on June 7th, 1968 with 2 enemy battalions destroyed
and numerous weapons captured.

The heavy weapons used in this battle were:

90mm guns mounted on US M.113 and M.48.
106mm recoilless rifles mounted on US jeeps.
76mm guns mounted on RVNAF M.41.

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The battle of Hue lasted 26 days. It was the bloodiest and most destructive battle in the offensive. This was true not only because of the fighting but also because of the mass murders by the Communists. In these mass murders thousands of innocent civilians were buried alive. It was a terrible nightmare for the population of Hue. The whole city was marked by the passage of death and no house was left untouched by the war. As a matter of fact the sufferings of the residents of Thua Thien Province were indescribable and have been the subject of many moving stories in the press. This document only deals with the military aspect of the battle.

A. GENERAL DEVELOPMENTS

Hue was very much alive on the eve of the New Year. The Dong Ba market was crowded with people. Many strangers were noticed strolling among the crowds. No one apparently paid much attention to them or thought anything unusual might happen in their peaceful city.

The same thing occurred to prices in Hue as in Saigon. Two weeks before Tet goods found almost no customers even though prices were rather low. Then the sudden buying spree which made the last days of the year caused a sharp increase in the prices of various commodities.

Throughout Tet's eve and New Year's Day firecrackers exploded almost endlessly and people went about their customary visits to relatives as if nothing were to happen.

On the morning of New Year's Day Brigadier General Ngo Quang Truong, commander of the First Infantry Division, with members of his staff were present at a flag-raising ceremony at Phu Van Lau which marked the coming of the Year of the Monkey. Shortly after the ceremony he received reports from the I Corps Headquarters that Viet Cong had attacked the towns of Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, as well as the I Corps Headquarters, the night before. The General immediately put his troops on full alert and remained at the Division Command headquarters for the night. Although coming with the order, the troops could not believe that an enemy assault was imminent.
was imminent.

At 2 o'clock in the morning, as the city was in sound sleep after a day of hectic festivities, the Viet Cong simultaneously slammed hundreds of rounds of mortar and rocket into the first Division Command Headquarters, the Sector Command Headquarters, the Dong Da military training center, and positions of the 7th Armored Cavalry at An Cuu.

About one hundred 82mm mortar rounds were fired into the Greater Mang Ca area alone.

At the same time enemy forces launched a ground assault against the Mang Ca section after storming through the An Hoa gate. An enemy force approached the Tay Loc airfield and attacked the arms and ammunition depot of the 1st Ordnance Company encountering heavy resistance. Another enemy force invaded the Citadel through the west gate which they destroyed by explosive charges. A battalion-sized enemy unit attacked the north position of the An Hoa bridge and occupied it after a half-hour battle. This unit then attacked An Hoa village from which our 2nd Airborne Battalion had withdrawn the day before. Advancing further into town the enemy occupied the Bach Ho bridge and destroyed one of its spans on the left bank of the Perfume River. The Viet Cong concentrated their attack on the Mang Ca section after occupying the An Hoa gate and the west gate. They encountered fierce resistance by our defenders firing from multistoried houses.

The enemy force attacked the Tay Loc airfield but became entangled in the defensive wire and turned toward the arms and ammunition depot. At 0350 hrs., they once more concentrated their assault against the airfield. They succeeded in burning the ammunition warehouse, the fuel tanks and the technicians' quarters. Throughout the following day they were unable to take the airfield. During another assault conducted at nightfall they reached the plane parking areas but were driven out the next morning.

A battle between enemy troops and the Reconnaissance company of the First Infantry Division raged around the Imperial Palace area. This battle ended at five o'clock in the morning when the area was overrun by the enemy. A big National Liberation Front flag was hoisted atop the Citadel's main flagpole at 8 o'clock in the morning.
On the second day of Tet enemy troops invaded several populated sections of the city located on the left bank of the Perfume River. The Inner Citadel or Imperial Palace area, the Dong Ba marketplace, the Thuong Tu, Chanh Tay and An Hoa gates came under their control. The enemy also easily seized the southern part of the city located on the right bank of the river. Enemy elements were seen in the streets encircling friendly military positions. They had already occupied various friendly administrative buildings, including the administrative headquarters of Thua Thien province, the university compound and other buildings. The MACV square, the Thua Thien sector command headquarters, the radio station, the pilot school and the Navy dock were still untouched.

On the second morning of Tet the First Division Commander ordered the 2nd Airborne Battalion to rush to the city from their location at Tu Ha to assist in relieving enemy pressure on the city. The paratroopers could hardly move into the city in the face of the enemy’s heavy fire from civilian houses. They also lacked support which was not available due to bad weather. A counter-attack by the 3/3 Battalion from the Nam Giao market also failed to relieve enemy pressure in the area. The 7th Armored Cavalry stationed at An Cuu then ordered to move toward the Citadel.

During the morning three attempts to enter the city by the 7th Armored Cavalry commanded by Lt. Col. Phan Huu Chi were unsuccessful. Around noon an American convoy came from Phu Bai to reinforce Col. Chi’s armor column, which again tried to reach the city with three tanks leading the counter-attack. The American column kept firing into the sugar fields on both sides of the road and stopped at the city’s outskirts. The three tanks pushed ahead and finally reached the City Police Headquarters in downtown Hue. The headquarters was still in friendly hands. Col. Chi’s tank was hit by an enemy B.40 rocket fired from a nearby house. He was killed.

The situation in Hue was very confused throughout the second day of Tet. All military installations were still in friendly hands. Only the recruiting office near the Bach Ho bridge and the field police base were occupied by the enemy after the overwhelming outnumbered defenders had fled. The Le Lai camp, where the Ordnance Company was stationed, was also overrun after a few hours of resistance. The defenders had run out of ammunition and fled.

At 8 o’clock in the morning on the third day of Tet
The First Airborne Battle Group, which included the 2nd and 7th Bat­

tions and the 3/7 Armor troop reached the city from An Lo and

Ha. The reinforcing 1st Airborne Headquarters and the 7th Bat­

tion arrived in Hue from Saigon at noon the same day.

Heavy fighting occurred in the village of An Hoa and

Xo. Finally the enemy withdrew into the Citadel.

The Communists held out in the Mang Ca area, the

annance base and the airfield. They launched an assault on the Mang

Camp, home of the headquarters of the First Infantry Division.

number of enemy soldiers, who penetrated the position of the

ision's Medical Company, were killed. Many friendly wounded

ners and nurses were massacred.

After several days of counter-attacks by friendly

ces, using armor, artillery and air support, the enemy abandoned

An Hoa area and the technicians' quarters of the Tay Loc Airfield

der to strengthen their position at the Chanh Tay Gate.

During the fighting, populated areas of Hue were

ed to Communist political propaganda activities. The Viet Cong

ed freely in the streets for three days in a row, from the second

fourth day of Tet, without any friendly reaction.

There were no American forces in Hue when the city

attacked except for a MACV sector advisory group which was

near the Thua Thien sector command.

It was not until the afternoon of the third day of Tet

company of U.S. Marines arrived as the first american unit

force the MACV element.

The U.S. Marine unit, moving in from the east, crossed

fume River by boats and landed near the Pilot School (see

operation, stage I). From there they moved to the MACV

and about 700 meters away.

In the third, fourth and fifth days of Tet (Feb. 1, 2 and

American forces, including three Marine companies and one

attalion from the First Marine Division, moved to the right

the Perfume River and established their base behind the MACV

nd. They launched their first operations to help liberate Hue

re.

On the fourth day of Tet the Viet Cong attacked the
First Engineer Group. They maintained their supply base. By late afternoon the enemy was driven off and the 4th Marines of all casualties. The first phase of the battle at Thua Thien was the result. Generals and political leaders anxiously waited the fate of the last leg of the battle. At times, it became evident that the battle could go on much longer than anticipated. The battle ended with MACV forces and the South Vietnamese operating in concert to clear the area. The battle at Thua Thien was a hard-fought battle that was critical to the success of the U.S. and South Vietnamese forces. The battle was the result of a well-planned campaign by the U.S. and South Vietnamese forces. The battle was fought in the battle at Thua Thien was a hard-fought battle that was critical to the success of the U.S. and South Vietnamese forces.
The First Engineer Battalion one kilometer south of Hue. They also main-
ained their pressure on the Tay Loc area, the Citadel, the Flapole
area, the administrative sector and the Dong Khanh high school. That
ight the enemy overran the city prison and freed about 2,000 prison-
ers of all categories. This added more confusion to the situation in
Hue. The freed prisoners, armed by the enemy, roamed the streets
and committed acts of reprisal.

During the fifth night of Tet the enemy burned a mili-
ty fuel depot at the Dinh market one kilometer northeast of Hue.
Stirred enemy actions were reported around the base camp of the
8th Transportation Battalion at An Cuu.

You may recall that Lt. Col. Phan Van Khoa, Chief
Thua Thien province, concurrently Mayor of Hue, was reported
killed during the first days of the enemy offensive. He was at first
believed to have been murdered by the enemy. Actually he escaped
hurt. At times he had to disguise himself as a hospital patient.

The actual counterattack by friendly forces did not
begin until the fifth day of Tet.

The combined Vietnamese - Allied operation was con-
cluded as follows:

- The American forces, consisting of the 2/5 Marine
Division with three companies and an armor battalion, started out from
MACV compound while the RAY Battle Group, consisting of two
companies, set out from the An Cuu bridge. Their mission
was to clear the right bank of the Perfume River.

- The Vietnamese forces, consisting of the First Air-
Battle Group with three battalions and one armor Squadron initi-
ted their action from north of the Citadel. The 9th Airborne Battalion,
lifted from Quang Tri to the Mang Ca camp on the afternoon of the
fifth day of Tet, also maneuvered into the Citadel. The First Air-
Battle Group, reinforced by elements of the First Infantry
Battalion, was to clear the left bank of the Perfume River.

Another friendly force took position northwest and
west of Hue. This was the First U.S. Air Cavalry Division
that had moved from An Khe in the pre-Tet days in order to assist
the military situation at Khe Sanh.

ARVN troops reoccupied half of the Citadel airfield
and the An Hoa gate during the fifth day of Tet. In this battle the enemy suffered 77 killed and 27 weapons captured. Friendly casualties were light.

On the sixth day of Tet (Feb. 4, 1968) there were no major developments. The enemy took advantage of the old French fortresses to resist allied forces in the Thuong Tu and Ky Dai areas. The enemy pressure on the left bank at Hue University and the MACV compound, was broken by the U.S. 2/5 Marine Battalion supported by Ontos each of which was equipped with six 106mm recoilless rifles. Fighting from street to street the Americans withdrew to the MACV area for the night and resumed this seesaw pattern the following day. These tactics failed to liberate the right bank of the Perfume River. However these tactics were aimed at taking full advantage of superior fire power to destroy small and scattered enemy units. Land control was only of secondary importance. In fact elements of the 2/5 U.S. Marine Battalion were able to break enemy pressure against several military installations and populated areas. As friendly troops withdrew from these areas, after a few hours' occupation, the enemy returned and resumed their sniper fire. During the first six days of Tet the enemy virtually controlled the administrative area, including the office of the government delegate, the residence of the province chief, the city jail and the Khai Dinh high school. On the friendly side the 12th Sea Junk Force still patrolled the Perfume River. It took light casualties from enemy mortar fire. Air support was limited because of bad weather.

The following day, the seventh day of Tet, the Communists launched an attack against the 1st Engineer Battalion one kilometer south of Hue. One ARVN battalion, in the meantime, moved to reinforce the friendly force in the Citadel.

In the afternoon American troops retook a large portion of the right bank. The Viet Cong remained entrenched at the Quoc Hoc high school.

At 11:30 AM on the ninth day of Tet, reinforced by two battalions from An Hoa - Kim Long, the enemy launched an assault against 4/3 Battalion stationed at Chanh Tay. This attack caused fairly heavy casualties for the friendly side as well as losses of communication equipment and weapons. Seven enemy blew up the Trang Tien bridge destroying two of its 12 spans.

River, succeeded by American forces at the end of the month. The American staff won the war for the residents of the town. The enemy lost two officers and 49 wounded.

administration of the town was transferred to the residents who then had to return to their homes. The town was established by the French after American withdrawal and was destroyed by the Communists. The Viet Cong prepared the town for an attack on war-torn Hue. The Viet Cong had to be buried until war's end. The burial was held on the side of the hill and was to call in a U.S. missile district and launch a series of rockets in order to control the situation.
On the tenth day of Tet American troops recaptured the office of the Administrative Delegate. The enemy continued to hold out at the stadium, the railway station and the Phu Cam area. A U.S. Marine force had been positioning their forces, opposite the railway station at the end of Le Loi street, near the University compound for two days.

Friendly forces on the left bank made no progress.

American troops, on the right bank of the Perfume River, successfully drove the enemy out of the stadium, the railway station and Phu Cam on Feb. 9, 1968 - the 11th day of the first lunar month. The Communists split into smaller units and withdrew toward Nam Giao.

From Jan. 31 to Feb. 9, 1968, a ten-day period, the enemy lost 934 killed, 4 captured, and had 307 of his weapons seized. American casualties were 31 killed, 201 seriously and 80 lightly wounded.

Although a 24-hour curfew was imposed by the province administration and publicized by Hue Radio, many of the City's residents took advantage of the decreased intensity of the fighting to return to their homes to fetch whatever belongings they could. There were two refugee camps on the right bank. One was located at the Redemptorist Church and the other at the Pilot School. A third camp was established at Phu Luong. These camps were set up immediately after American troops started their counterattack. As friendly operations advanced more and more civilians were liberated from the Communists and transferred to the refugee camps. The refugees prepared their meals themselves. They even tore down windows and pieces of furniture to cook their meals since they lacked firewood.

The bodies of the dead which had been left scattered on war-torn streets and alleys of the ancient imperial capital city - Viet Cong as just plain innocent civilians - were not collected for burial until Feb. 10, 1968. The odor of decomposition filled the air. The burials were only temporary. The bodies were merely buried on the side of streets and alleys. The Thua Thien Sector Command had to call in a number of Regional Force men stationed in Huong Thuy district and cadets of the Dong Da Training Center in Phu Bai to launch a sweep operation against enemy remnants and to resume control of all the remaining populated sections of the city.
American Marines were helilifted into the city to reinforce the 2/5 U.S. Battalion on the right bank of the Perfume River at 1600 hr. on Feb. 10. This was the first such reinforcement since the Hue battle began. The helilift was finally completed satisfactorily despite very bad weather. Another Marine unit moved by truck into the city from Phu Bai at the same time. The local officials and people became optimistic as they witnessed all these reinforcing troop movements.

In the afternoon of Feb. 10, an LCU of the Vietnamese Sea Junk Force arrived by the Teachers' Training School and picked up a cargo of supplies from the first Division Command headquarters which was on the left bank of the Perfume River. These supplies were then ferried to the military installations of the Thua Thien Section on the right bank.

In the section north of the Perfume River three Vietnamese airborne battalions and four infantry battalions were closing in on an enemy force firmly entrenched among bunkers and battle-scarred houses. The Gia Hoi section was still under enemy control and was two-thirds of Phan Boi Chau street. Friendly troops advanced cautiously within the Citadel since the enemy still held many vantage points. The search-and-destroy operation was made more difficult because the enemy chose to hide among the people and their dwellings.

The commander of the First Infantry Division faced a difficult choice on whether to execute slow, careful house-to-house fighting or to engage in a swift steamroller operation. The former would save civilian lives and property but would cost extra friendly casualties. The latter could result in a swifter liquidation of enemy pockets of resistance but would entail sizeable human and material losses for the trapped civilians.

On the morning of Feb. 12 an advance reconnaissance unit of the Marine Battle Group A was helilifted into the Citadel.

At 1800h, a US Marine unit crossed the Perfume River, landed on Bao Vinh quay and started to maneuver into the Citadel. On the morning of Feb. 13 the landing operation of US Marines on Bao Vinh continued. This was the first time in the Hue battle that American Marines engaged the enemy inside the Citadel as they were reinforcing Vietnamese troops. They were warmly welcomed by the people.