

Thurs. Feb 12th 68.

In Vietnam -- a grim, bloody job today. Restoring order from chaos -- wiping out the last vestige of a four-day Red rampage -- stretching the length and breadth of the land.

In the face of massive U.S. and Allied retaliation -- pockets of enemy resistance crumbling fast in city after city. ~~U.S. Commander~~ General Westmoreland pointing to mounting evidence -- as he put it -- "that the enemy is about ready to run out of steam."

At last report ^{a Viet Cong stronghold in} the ancient imperial capital of Hue -- ~~perhaps the toughest~~ ^{But} ~~long Viet Cong~~ holdout. ~~and~~ even there -- the enemy's hours numbered. An American officer saying: ~~Once~~ ^{"Once} they have used up what they brought in -- they are finished," ~~said he.~~ ^{said he.}

At the same time -- tales of individual heroism are beginning to pour in. In ~~one~~ ^{one} U.S. military hospital --

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VIETNAM--2

patients donning flak jackets over their pajamas -- to turn back a threatened attack. In another case -- a company of clerks who had never seen combat before -- helping ~~to~~ fight off a Viet Cong ^{raid on} ~~attack against~~ a U.S. air base.

"They performed beautifully" -- said their commander later. Adding: "When you're getting shot at -- it ^{does} come naturally."

LOS ANGELES

Here at home -- in Los Angeles -- a claim today that those North Vietnamese attacks were suicide raids, pure and simple. Acts of desperation -- bringing the enemy no ~~closer~~ closer to victory than before.

This -- according to Lieut. General Victor ⁹Krulak -- Commander of ^(U.S.) Marine Forces in the Pacific; who said that "except for the lamentable loss of military and civilian lives -- things are just about the same in Siagon today -- as they were before the raids."

WHITE HOUSE FOLLOW LOS ANGELES

At the White House -- President Johnson was also taking

Note

of the North Vietnamese attacks. This during a Medal of Honor ceremony -- for Air Force Major Merlyn Dethlefsen.

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The President saying the U.S. has no intention of stopping the bombing of North Vietnam in return for some vague promise of possible peace talks. If Hanoi is really interested in peace -- said LBJ -- it had better provide "some better sign than these past few days."

WASHINGTON

~~Here at home~~ ² More on the war ⁻⁻⁻ from Defense

Secretary ~~Robert~~ McNamara -- in his annual report today to the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The Soviet Union and other Communist countries -- are now pouring military and economic aid into North Vietnam -- said he. In dollar-value -- the amount totaling about One Billion last year; obviously prompted in part -- by U.S. victory after victory on the battlefield.

Even so -- the "ultimate success of our entire effort" depends almost solely on Saigon -- said ~~Robert~~ McNamara; for it is there -- said he -- that the South Vietnamese must develop "the ability and self-discipline -- that a people must have to govern themselves."

Almost in passing -- McNamara also disclosing that Russia has nearly doubled her intercontinental ballistic missile force -- in just the past year. No danger though -- said he. Adding that U.S. nuclear striking power -- is still four times that of Russia.

ECONOMICS FOLLOW WASHINGTON

Turning to the domestic front -- President Johnson's annual economic report was also delivered today to Congress. Beginning with a plea to labor and management -- to "resist the false lure of higher prices and excessive wage increases;" ending with a renewed call for a tax increase -- to help put the brakes on inflation.

In between -- the President asserting that sacrifices are surely needed -- if the nation is to continue to enjoy unprecedented prosperity. "Not great sacrifices, to be sure" -- said he -- "but more than some seem willing to pay."

MOSCOW

On that Korean truce line -- another brief skirmish -- ~~today~~ between U.S. border guards -- and would-be North Korean infiltrators. Meanwhile, back in Washington -- the U.S. State Department today seconding a North Korean suggestion; agreeing it would be just fine -- if ~~the~~ Pueblo crisis could be settled by the Military Armistice Commission at Panmunjom.

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Now this latest: Moscow radio tonight reporting ~~that~~ a second U.S. intelligence ship -- is currently steaming toward North Korean waters. The big difference between this one and the Pueblo -- says ~~the~~ the Russians: It's not alone. Its escort said to include the U.S. Aircraft Carrier Yorktown -- also the Cruiser Providence.

COLUMBUS

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In the midst of great turmoil in Vietnam -- when Americans sometimes throw up their hands and ask "what for -- what's the use?" -- this next perhaps of special note. It's a letter from Staff Sergeant Richard Kemp -- to his seven-year-old son Mike; who is back home in Columbus, Georgia -- trying to understand why his father has to serve halfway round the world.

The letter reads, in part: "I can't come home now, Mike -- because I have to make my payment on the price of liberty. Being a soldier -- I'm proud to do it. As an American -- I have to do it. And you too -- must be proud that I can do this."

"If you are" -- the letter goes on -- "you'll be helping me a lot until I get home; and then we can go fishing -- like I promised. Love -- Dad."

NEW HAMPSHIRE

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~~In the Republican race for the White House -- it's official at last today.~~ Richard Nixon will be a candidate -- starting out with New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation Presidential primary.

~~Nixon's formal announcement~~ ~ In an open letter to the citizens of that State, The former Vice President -- pledging new solutions ^{To} ~~the~~ old problems. Adding that for "these critical years -- America needs new leadership."

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Informed of ^{the} Nixon's candidacy -- Governor Romney of Michigan quickly responding: "So what's new?" ^{What's} new -- tell us Warren.

Governor Claude Kirk of Florida -- another whose name has been entered in the New Hampshire primary. Unbeknownst to the governor -- qualifying petitions filed late yesterday by Connecticut State Representative Aran Parnagian.

The morning after -- today in Tallahassee -- Governor Kirk saying he will have to consider the situation very carefully, before deciding -- whether to withdraw. While at Concord -- this from Parnagian -- re Kirk: "He doesn't know me from a hole in the wall -- I like him though."

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... By H. J. ...

