

# Saigon Bombers Hit Captured Area

## Saigon

South Vietnam sent waves of fighter-bombers against Viet Cong headquarters and Communist positions north of Saigon yesterday and the Viet Cong claimed the raids caused heavy civilian casualties.

The South Vietnamese planes hit the Viet Cong

headquarters at Loc Ninh and the newly captured provincial capital of Phuoc Binh City, the Saigon command reported. A spokesman said the strikes set off explosions that sent smoke more than 3000 feet into the air.

Associated Press newsmen watched waves of su-

per-sonic F-5 fighter-bombers supplied by the United States take off from the Bien Hoa air base, 15 miles northeast of Saigon, to attack what the command described as North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troop concentrations, anti-aircraft gun sites and supply and ammunition depots along the Cambodian border.

Lieutenant Colonel Do Viet, deputy chief spokesman for the command, said the raids began Tuesday night within hours of the fall of Phuoc Binh, 75 miles north of Saigon. Loc Ninh is 30 miles west of Phuoc Binh city.

Viet described the strikes as a "defensive action," claiming the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong used Loc Ninh and other bases in the region as staging areas for attacks on Phuoc Binh.

Viet said the raids triggered secondary explosions, sending columns of smoke 1000 yards into the sky. He said all of the South Vietnamese attack planes returned safely to Bien Hoa.

Major General Le Ngoc Trien, deputy chief of staff for operations on the Saigon joint general staff, told a news conference that the purpose of the raids against the Phuoc Binh area was to keep the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong from using war materials left behind.

Trien said thought was being given to launching an operation to retake Phuoc Binh, but he did not elaborate.

The Viet Cong delegation to the two-party Joint Military Commission in Saigon de-

# More Aid to Saigon Being 'Considered'

Washington

President Ford and his administration have "under intense consideration" the question of going forward with supplemental assistance to South Vietnam, a State Department spokesman said yesterday.

Press officer Robert Anderson acknowledged that the government is considering going forward with the supplemental program in response to a South Vietnamese call for help.

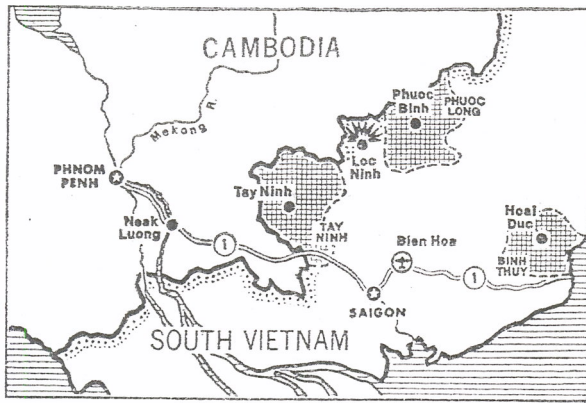
The administration has been preparing the way to introduce a \$300 million supplemental request to Congress to restore cuts made in military assistance to South Vietnam approved last month.

The figure represents the difference between the \$1 billion authorized for military aid to the Saigon government and the \$700 million which was finally appropriated for this purpose.

South Vietnamese officials have been seeking a step up in U.S. military aid to help meet the current Communist offensive.

Associated Press

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EPI Telephoto

**Jets from Bien Hoa airport raided suspected Communist positions in Tay Ninh, Loc Ninh, Phuoc Binh and Hoai Duc. Checkered areas indicate provinces.**

described the raids as a "criminal act" and said they inflicted heavy civilian casualties and property damage in the Communist zones. A spokesman for the delegation said a protest would be filed with the four-nation International Commission of Control and Supervision.

The South Vietnamese government is reported to have an entire infantry division, as well as local forces, around the provincial capital of Tay Ninh to meet the threat in the area near the Cambodian border and just south of regions of Communist strength.

East of Saigon, it reported continued insurgent shelling and some ground fighting around the town of Hoai Duc, capitol of Binh Thuy province, another area where both sides have major forces.

In Cambodia, field reports said 1000 government troops spearheaded by armored vehicles lifted an eight-day-old Khmer Rouge siege at Baseth Hill, 13 miles northwest of Phnom Penh. The hill is important to Phnom Penh because it guards the city's northwestern defense line.

The reports said 80 gov-

ernment soldiers were killed in the operation to retake the hill. Rebel casualties were not known, but the Phnom Penh command said they were heavy.

The command also said government troops found the bodies of 16 Buddhist nuns in a pagoda near Baseth Hill. It said they were murdered after being raped by Khmer Rouge soldiers.

Villagers in the area reported earlier that Khmer Rouge troops bayoneted and blew up more than 100 civilians on Monday. Other villagers, however, said some were caught in a crossfire between government troops and insurgents as they tried to escape from the fighting.