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# Some Saigon Troops in Laos, But Activities Are Kept Secret

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Tuesday, March 30 — Some South Vietnamese troops continued operating inside Laos yesterday near the area from which a large Government task force withdrew last week.

Their continued presence in the area was acknowledged by the South Vietnamese command, but it refused to discuss their activities.

"They are secret," a spokesman said, "because we don't like our enemies to know what we are doing there."

The spokesman indicated that the operations would be made public as soon as the soldiers made their first contact with the enemy.

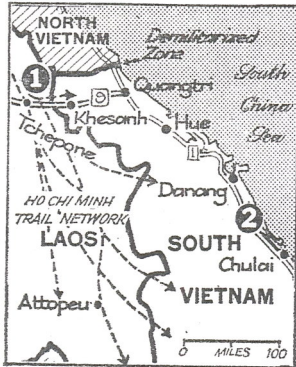
Meanwhile, President Nguyen Van Thieu abruptly put off a news conference that had been scheduled for today. He acted after news reached here that an American-supported South Vietnamese raid on a North Vietnamese division headquarters inside Laos had been called off.

American helicopter pilots reported that the mission, scheduled for Sunday, was canceled because of heavy anti-aircraft fire at the target, about 30 miles south of the area on which the recently completed South Vietnamese drive in Laos had centered. With fog enshrouding the area, heavy American air strikes had failed to silence the anti-aircraft batteries.

The raid was to have been carried out, it was reliably reported, by 300 South Vietnamese infantrymen. They had already started by air from Quangtri in northeastern South Vietnam when the mission was abandoned.

More than 100 miles to the southeast yesterday, United States troops were searching for the North Vietnamese who killed 33 Americans and wounded 76 in a raid early Sunday on an artillery base.

According to military sources, the base, 50 miles south of



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**South Vietnamese troops were said to be operating for foe was pressed after inside Laos (1). Search raid south of Danang (2).**

Danang, was manned by about 140 artillery and infantrymen when it was attacked and briefly overrun. Thus, all but 21 were either killed or wounded.

The attack, one of the costliest single attacks on a United States base on record here, was viewed as part of the enemy's continuing pressure on allied units in the northern part of the country following the sweep in Laos.

Speaking of that sweep, the spokesman for the South Vietnamese command said yesterday: "We absolutely deny" reports that the 20,000-man Government operation suffered a total of 10,000 killed, wounded and missing.

The spokesman repeated that Government losses in Laos were 1,160 dead, 4,271 wounded and 240 missing.

### U.S. Base Attacked Again

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Tuesday, March 30 (AP) — Still stunned from Sunday's attack, the Americal's Division's artillery base south of Danang came under enemy mortar attack early yesterday.

The installation, known as Fire Base Mary Ann, has reportedly been reinforced.

The enemy also shelled a South Vietnamese resettlement village about 25 miles to the north and followed up with a

ground attack, reportedly killing 13 civilians and wounding 21. One hundred houses were reported destroyed.

North Vietnamese artillery, it was reported, also shelled the headquarters of the Americal Division at Chulai and hit the Danang air base, wounding several Americans and damaging some aircraft.

The United States command reported two more helicopters shot down, one in southern Laos and the other on the Vietnamese side of the border. One crewman was wounded, the command said. The two crashes raised to 99 the number of helicopters reported lost in the Laos operation.

The command said two Americans were killed and 12 wounded Sunday in ground clashes northeast of Khesanh.