

U.S. Pulls Back on Its Bombing Attacks

Saigon

American bombers limited their attacks yesterday to enemy troop concentrations and base areas inside South Vietnam, United States military sources said.

However, an official source expressed the belief that there will be renewed bombing of North Vietnam's heartland, including Hanoi and Haiphong, unless Communist forces call off their 19-day-old offensive in South Vietnam.

In the ground war, U.S. officers in besieged An Loc said the enemy still held 15 per cent of the provincial capital, 60 miles north of Saigon, and has set up a quasi-government in the part they control.

A U.S. general who flew over An Loc said there is no danger the town will fall now, despite the continued North Vietnamese pressure.

Two major enemy tank and infantry thrusts into the town have failed to overrun the 9000 defenders who have been encircled for more than a week. Two more battalions of South Vietnamese paratroopers and a ranger unit were flown by helicopter into An Loc over the weekend.

The Communist command had identified An Loc as one of the provincial capitals it planned to seize and place under the rule of the Viet Cong.

Advisers on the ground said one enemy tank was rumbling around north of An Loc but, outside of that, the situation was "pretty well stabilized." Sunday, the South Vietnamese military command said all of An Loc was in government hands. In reality, the enemy not only controlled the northern edge of town but also its vital airport.

Potentially equally worrisome to the South Vietnamese command were elements of a North Vietnamese Division moving through War Zone C, bypassing the fighting at An Loc, apparently, for attacks closer to Saigon. The Saigon government's 21st Division was pulled out of a relief force, stalled in its attempts to reach An Loc, and sent to meet the new threat.

Major General Alexander M. Haig, assistant to presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger, toured South Vietnam's northernmost military region yesterday as part of his attempt to make a

firsthand assessment for the White House on the current enemy offensive.

A senior U.S. officer said later Haig was "satisfied that they (government forces) can handle the situation . . . and satisfied with the performance of the ARVN" — Army of South Vietnam.

A senior U.S. officer said the situation is "much improved" around Fire Base Bastogne, keystone of the southwestern defenses of Hue. The base, 12 miles southwest of Hue, has been under siege.

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