

# More U.S. War Planes to Asia

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The United States is sending some additional war planes to Southeast Asia, a Pentagon spokesman said today.

Jerry W. Friedheim told newsmen there would be "some additional augmentation of land-based air," continuing a U.S. buildup to try to repel the North Vietnamese offensive in South Vietnam. He would not specify the extent of the buildup.

Sources indicated the new air reinforcements which will come from the United States, will raise the number of U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine fighter-bombers and bombers sent to South Vietnam, Thailand and Guam since early April to around 300 and will bring total U.S. land-based and carrier-based strike planes in the theater to more than 800.

## More Vessels

Friedheim noted some additional naval vessels are en route, indicating new departures of warships for Southeast Asian waters are planned immediately.

Disclosure of the additional air reinforcements came shortly after the breakdown of resumed peace negotiations in Paris, a diplomatic development which suggested the United States might accelerate the air war against North Vietnam once again.

However, Friedheim characterized the air reinforcements as part of "an overall plan to make sure Gen. (Creighton W.) Abrams has available to him all the air and naval assets he needs to protect remaining American troops and to assist the South Vietnamese" to repel the offensive.

Announcement of the air reinforcements came during a new battlefield crisis in South Vietnam which developed within the past week. The provincial capital of Quang Tri fell and a major threat developed to Hue farther south.

The arrival of a fifth air-

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craft carrier off Vietnam this week, along with escorting destroyers, brought the number of American naval vessels operating in those waters to about 60, at least equalling the number that were there at the Vietnam war peak in 1968.

Friedheim said that on some days allied aircraft have flown upward of 1000 attack sorties, principally in South Vietnam.

In the April 29-May 3 period, he said, U.S. planes flew more than 500 strike sorties against targets in North Vietnam. A sortie is a single flight by a single plane.

Friedheim confirmed that a huge C5 transport plane had arrived in Da Nang carrying three M48 medium tanks to replace some of South Vietnam's tank losses in the battle around Quang Tri.

The tanks came from U.S. stocks in the Pacific, he said.

Reports reaching the Pentagon have said that the South Vietnamese "rendered inoperable" 16 of their own tanks and spiked 30 artillery pieces before retreating from Quang Tri.

During the same briefing, Friedheim displayed pictures of a variety of heavy

Soviet-built weapons which he said have shown up in South Vietnam for the first time this year and are main elements in the North Vietnamese invasion force.

Among other things, these weapons included T54 and T34 medium tanks with guns of up to 100 millimeters, a variety of artillery including 130 millimeter guns with a range of 14 miles, 122 millimeter field guns, and several types of antiaircraft weapons, including twin-barrelled sophisticated self-propelled 57 millimeter antiaircraft weapons.

Friedheim also said there are about two dozen ships flying Soviet and Communist bloc flags in Haiphong, about twice as many as before the invasion started in late March, but about the same number as have normally been in Haiphong, North Vietnam's principal port, unloading war gear.