

# Saigon Reports Fall of 6 Towns; Sees Political Drive by Enemy

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Wednesday, Oct. 18 (AP)—South Vietnamese military spokesmen reported yesterday that six villages in the Central Highlands had been seized by Communist troops in what appeared to be a "plant-the-flag" campaign.

One village was reported retaken by dusk after fighting in which five civilians, six Government militiamen and 12 enemy soldiers were said to have been killed.

Behind the wave of attacks, spokesmen said, is a Communist command directive code-named "Resolution X-10." The directive was captured, the spokesmen say, adding that it ordered Vietcong political activists to raise their red, blue and yellow flags in as many South Vietnamese villages as possible.

One South Vietnamese officer called it a "form of political struggle" but said he did not know whether the order had been issued in the expectation of an Indochina cease-fire.

## Villages Poorly Defended

Some analysts say that the widespread though small-scale enemy actions of recent weeks have been calculated to create at least the illusion of dominance in the countryside, which would support Communist assertions at the negotiating table.

Reports from the field said that all of the villages seized yesterday were poorly defended

by Government militiamen, who withdrew under enemy pressure. Some civilians were able to flee with the militia, it was said, but the Communists took control of the others.

Five of the villages were inhabited by montagnard tribesmen and one by South Vietnamese. Five of the villages are 10 miles west of Kontum and 15 to 25 miles south of Pleiku. The sixth is southeast of Pleiku, in Phubon Province.

Farther north, more than 100 enemy soldiers attacked a refugee camp five miles from Quanggai, a provincial capital on the north central coast, reports from the area said. The Communist soldiers, firing rifles and hurling satchel charges, reportedly stormed through the camp, killing 11 refugees and 6 militiamen and destroying eight dwellings and a school. The enemy force was said to have lost 9 dead before withdrawing inland.

In the Saigon area, small clashes were reported north, northwest and southwest of the city, but officers continued to dismiss the possibility of any significant ground attack on the capital. They conceded that the enemy might attempt rocket, demolition and terror attacks in Saigon.

Five major highways radiating from the capital were reported open. But some sections were considered unsafe and some were open only to light vehicles.

In the air war, overcast skies cut the number of United States fighter-bomber strikes against North Vietnam to about 230 Monday, the United States command announced, saying that the targets included two MIG bases north of Hanoi.

Air Force pilots said their bombs put craters in the runway in three places at the Yenbai air base, 80 miles northwest of Hanoi, and cut the runway in two places at the Kep airfield, 34 miles northeast of Hanoi.

Navy pilots reported attacking the Binhlong fuel depot 10 miles south of Vinh for the sec-



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Several villages in the Pleiku region (1) were seized by foe. U.S. jets bombed targets near Vinh (2) and Hanoi (3).

ond successive day. The pilots estimated that they destroyed more than 1,000 barrels of fuel and damaged five supply buildings, causing more than a score of secondary explosions and leaving 15 sustained fires.

## Posts Reported Overrun

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Oct. 17 (AP) — North Vietnamese forces reportedly overran three Government garrisons off Route 5 today and brought their drive to shut down the vital rice road within 18 miles of the capital.

A military source who visited the area reported a ground and mortar assault on company-size Government positions on a spur road off the main route less than two miles west of the district headquarters town of Oudong.