

SF Examiner
No Peace--
NOV 2 1972
Hanoi Ups
War Pace

SAIGON — (AP) — North Vietnamese forces led by tanks overran a South Vietnamese border camp in the Central Highlands today. Hanoi announced it had "no other choice than to step up the fight on all fronts" following a U.S. delay in signing a draft peace plan.

Duc Co, about 200 miles north of Saigon, is one of a series of frontier base camps screening enemy infiltration from Laos and Cambodia.

It was surrounded by North Vietnamese tanks and infantry, pounded by artillery and missiles and assaulted from three sides.

Join Others

Shortly before dawn, the rangers abandoned the camp and were reported to have broken out to the relative safety of a jungle plateau 500 yards from the camp. There they joined other government troops.

There was no immediate report on the fate of at least 60 rangers wounded inside the camp and unable to be evacuated by air because of intense antiaircraft fire.

One witness who flew over Duc Co shortly before noon said a pall of black smoke hung over the camp, apparently the result of explosions in the ammunition bunkers.

Strikes Continue

U.S. and South Vietnamese gunships and bombers circled Duc Co for hours pounding the North Vietnamese positions in a fruitless effort to turn back the attack. At least three enemy tanks were reported knocked out.

The air strikes continued throughout the day to pre-

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Hanoi Steps Up
Pace of Warfare

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ranger camp north of Duc Co overrun last month. A spokesman said later the camp had been occupied only by a reconnaissance unit, which pulled out hours later without making contact with the enemy.

pare for a government counterattack.

North Vietnamese troops were reported to have penetrated a hamlet less than four miles outside Pleiku, headquarters for South Vietnam's central region in the Highlands. Field reports said government troops retook the hamlet, known as Plei Blang 3, this morning.

Officers in Pleiku said the incident was evidence the North Vietnamese main force units were breaking into small groups and trying to penetrate as many areas as possible in preparation for a cease-fire. Similar reports were received from Da Nang, headquarters for the country's northern region.

The Saigon command claimed its forces had reoccupied Ben Het, a border

ranger camp north of Duc Co overrun last month. A spokesman said later the camp had been occupied only by a reconnaissance unit, which pulled out hours later without making contact with the enemy.

Driven Out

A military spokesman also said the enemy had been driven out of four hamlets in the Saigon area and that all major highways in the capital region were open. North Vietnamese troops had occupied several hamlets and cut roads within a few miles of Saigon in recent weeks.

In a renewed condemnation of the Nixon Administration for its hesitancy to sign a draft peace agreement worked out last month, Hanoi radio said: "The Vietnamese people have no other choice than to step up

their fight on all fronts — military, political and diplomatic — until complete victory."

A Voice of Vietnam radio commentary relayed by Hanoi's Vietnam News Agency accused the United States of failing to honor its commitment to sign the peace agreement.

The Viet Cong radio claimed its forces were responsible for the crash Tuesday of a U.S. helicopter that killed 22 Americans in the Mekong Delta.