

# Massive Firepower Breaks Red Siege At Con Thien

By LEWIS M. SIMONS  
SAIGON. (AP)—North Vietnam's regulars have taken a beating—a Dien Bien Phu in reverse—in the battle of Con Thien, U.S. military authorities announced Wednesday. MASSIVE AMERICAN firepower was officially credited with breaking the back of the month-long artillery siege of Con Thien and other Marine outposts overlooking Red infiltration routes just below the demilitarized zone.

Mud-stained Leathernecks helped in static defense, a posture alien to their combat training, to turn the tables against potential invasion of the strategic upper tier of South Vietnam's provinces. There was the caution, however, that Ho Chi Minh's forces may try again to wipe out Marine lines with the help of Viet Cong and infiltrated North Vietnamese in the hinterland below the DMZ.

GEN. WILLIAM C. Westmore-

land, the U.S. commander, told newsmen in Da Nang the enemy has suffered a crushing defeat, but there may be such a "resurgence of effort."

In air operations U.S. squadrons, which struck as close as 10 miles to Red China's frontier Tuesday and bombed two bridges that the Pentagon had previously ruled off limits, lashed again at North Vietnam.

A broadcast dispatch from Hanoi, unconfirmed by American authorities in Saigon, declared eight planes were shot down. The North Vietnamese said four of the eight fell during attacks on the repeatedly raided port of Haiphong.

Westmoreland and Cushman, who met in Da Nang, and American spokesmen in Saigon assessed gains in the DMZ phase of a war that is again under critical examination in the U.S. Senate.

INTELLIGENCE sources estimated the Communists had lost 3,000 men killed or wounded, nearly three times the casualties among the Marines, since launching daily barrages against Con Thien Sept. 1.

Spokesmen said that, though there was no sign of a general withdrawal of the 35,000 North Vietnamese estimated to be based in and near the DMZ, aerial reconnaissance showed groups in retreat from abandoned gun pits.

Westmoreland told a Washington Star reporter: "They tried to make another Dien Bien Phu of Con Thien. Instead, we made it a Dien Bien Phu in reverse."

THE ARTILLERY concentrated by the North Vietnamese against Con Thien was their heaviest since defeat of a French force in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu, in the hills west of Hanoi, led France to pull out of Indochina.

But the Red barrages, at times topping 1,000 rounds a day, were far outweighed by the American counterfire.

Land-based U.S. artillery lobbed 6,000 shells daily at known and suspected Communist positions, and hundreds of others in direct duelling with Communist guns. U.S. 7th Fleet warships hurled in shells from the sea. B52 Stratofortresses cast down more than 7,500 tons of explosives and their little brothers, the jet fighter-bombers, swarmed in squadron by squadron. Westmoreland has called this the heaviest concentration of conventional firepower in history.

Elsewhere action was generally light and scattered.

U.S. PILOTS flew 106 missions over North Vietnam Tuesday despite spotty weather.

# Aggies In Service

MICHAEL A. PALMER  
FT. BELVOIR, VA. (AHTNC)  
—Second Lieutenant Michael A. Palmer, 23, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alvin A. Palmer, 1222 Peck, Duncan, Okla., completed an engineer officer course at the Army Engineer School, Ft. Belvoir, Va., Sept. 15.

During the nine-week course, he was trained in the operation and maintenance of construction equipment, logistics, administration and road construction.

Lt. Palmer received his commission through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Texas A&M, where he was graduated this year.

JAMES L. McNULTY  
SYRACUSE, N. Y. (AHTNC)  
—James L. McNulty, son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis J. McNulty, 1208 Seventh Ave. N., Texas City, began one year of study this summer in the Army Comptrollership School at Syracuse University, Syracuse, N. Y.

The school is a joint military-civilian school conducted by the university to train personnel in advanced financial and management practices.

Students who qualify will receive master of business administration degrees upon graduation and will be assigned to comptrollership positions throughout the Army.

James L. McNulty is chief of the program and budget division, office of assistant chief of staff, personnel, Headquarters, Eighth U. S. Army in Seoul, Korea. He received his B.B.A. degree in 1958 at Texas A&M.

JOHN S. GRIFFITH  
Texas A&M graduate John S. Griffith has been promoted to first lieutenant at Fort Hood, where he commands a headquarters company.

The 1966 business management graduate has the company of the 2nd Armored Division's 2nd Battalion, 67th Armor. He was in Company A-1 of the Corps.

KURT A. MUSTON  
U. S. ARMY, VIETNAM (AHTNC)—Army First Lieutenant Kurt A. Muston, 24, son of Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) and Mrs. Thomas W. Muston, 9800 Blue Wing Drive, El Paso, was assigned to the 1099th Transportation Company, 4th Transportation Command in Vietnam, Sept. 21.

Lt. Muston, a platoon leader in the company, entered the Army in May 1966 and was last stationed at Ft. Knox, Ky.

He is a 1961 graduate of Frankfurt (Germany) American High School and received his commission through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Texas A&M, where he received a B.A. degree in 1966. His wife, Ruby, lives at 2701 Kent, Bryan.

HAROLD C. SCHADE  
FT. SAM HOUSTON. (AHTNC)—Second Lieutenant Harold C. Schade, 22, son of Colonel and Mrs. Tom O. Matthews, 933 Morningside Drive, San Antonio, completed a medical service officer basic course at Brooke Army Medical Center, Ft. Sam Houston, Sept. 8.

During the eight-week course, he was trained in field medical procedures, supply, administration and organization, and the performance of medical services in combat.

Lt. Schade received his commission through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Texas A&M, where he received a degree in journalism in 1967.

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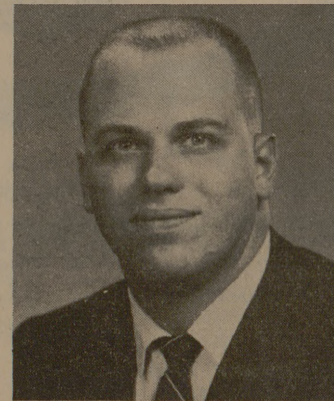
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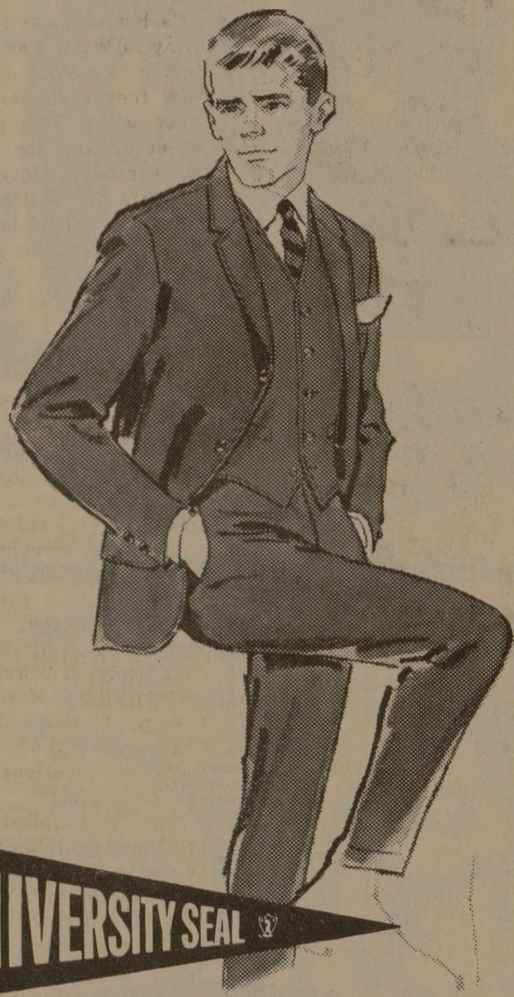
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