

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

22 April 1965

~~TOP SECRET~~

Mr. President

Operations in South Vietnam

We had a press report last night that US marines fought their first infantry clash with Viet Cong guerrillas. MACV has confirmed that the Viet Cong attacked a reconnaissance patrol of 41 Marines and 38 South Vietnamese in Binh Thai Village, nine miles from Da Nang Airbase. The Marines quickly replied to the fire and called for a rescue company. One Marine was slightly wounded. It is not known whether the Viet Cong suffered losses. Last reports indicate fighting has ceased.

Air Attacks Against North Vietnam

Twenty Navy strike aircraft conducted night reconnaissance missions of highway routes in North Vietnam on 21 April.

Strike aircraft from USS Hancock conducted a night recon of Routes 101 and 102. The aircraft repeatedly flew the 122 miles of highway for one and one-half hours. Two separate vehicles with lights were attacked. In both instances the lights went out, but results of the attacks are unknown.

Strike aircraft from the USS Midway conducted a night recon of Route 1A, covering approximately 200 miles. Ten trucks were estimated destroyed and eight damaged. Particularly significant on this mission was the sighting of a 15-20 truck convoy. The convoy was attacked with the aid of flares and six trucks were believed destroyed. Additional plans have been requested and approved for a strike on this target. Results are not yet available on the restrike.

Twenty two US and South Vietnamese strike aircraft, with 52 support aircraft, were launched for a strike on My Duc Highway Bridge and armed reconnaissance of Routes 8, 12, and 1A.

The strike on the bridge was successful and pilots report hitting and damaging 6 buildings on the route reconnaissance. One South Vietnamese aircraft crashed; details are not available at this time.

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A reconnaissance escort aircraft visually observed some PT type boats lying dead in the water about five miles off the coast. A special strike force of 18 aircraft was launched to destroy the boats. In-flight pilot reports indicate 5 boats were located. Two were hit with rockets, one of these is burning. Two large junks were also sighted and attacked. One was hit.

The Situation Room