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MARCH 1968

RETURN TO
Air Force
Historical Research Agency
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6678

v. 44

SUMMARY

AIR OPERATIONS SOUTHEAST ASIA

HEADQUARTERS PACAF

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VOLUME XLIV

MARCH 68

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LAOS INTERDICTION PROGRAM

MARCH 1968

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L A O S

During mid-March the Laotian panhandle began experiencing thunderstorms and morning fog activity indicative of the southwest monsoon season. Nevertheless, air strike totals exceeded last month's. USAF pilots flew approximately the same number of attack sorties in March as were flown last month, 5122 compared to 5045 (+1%). The USN and Marine Corps air strikes doubled those of February, 1992 compared to 1011. 7114 total attack sorties flown represents a net increase of 17% over February's 6057. The following table illustrates the trend for the last 3 months.

ATTACK SORTIE TREND

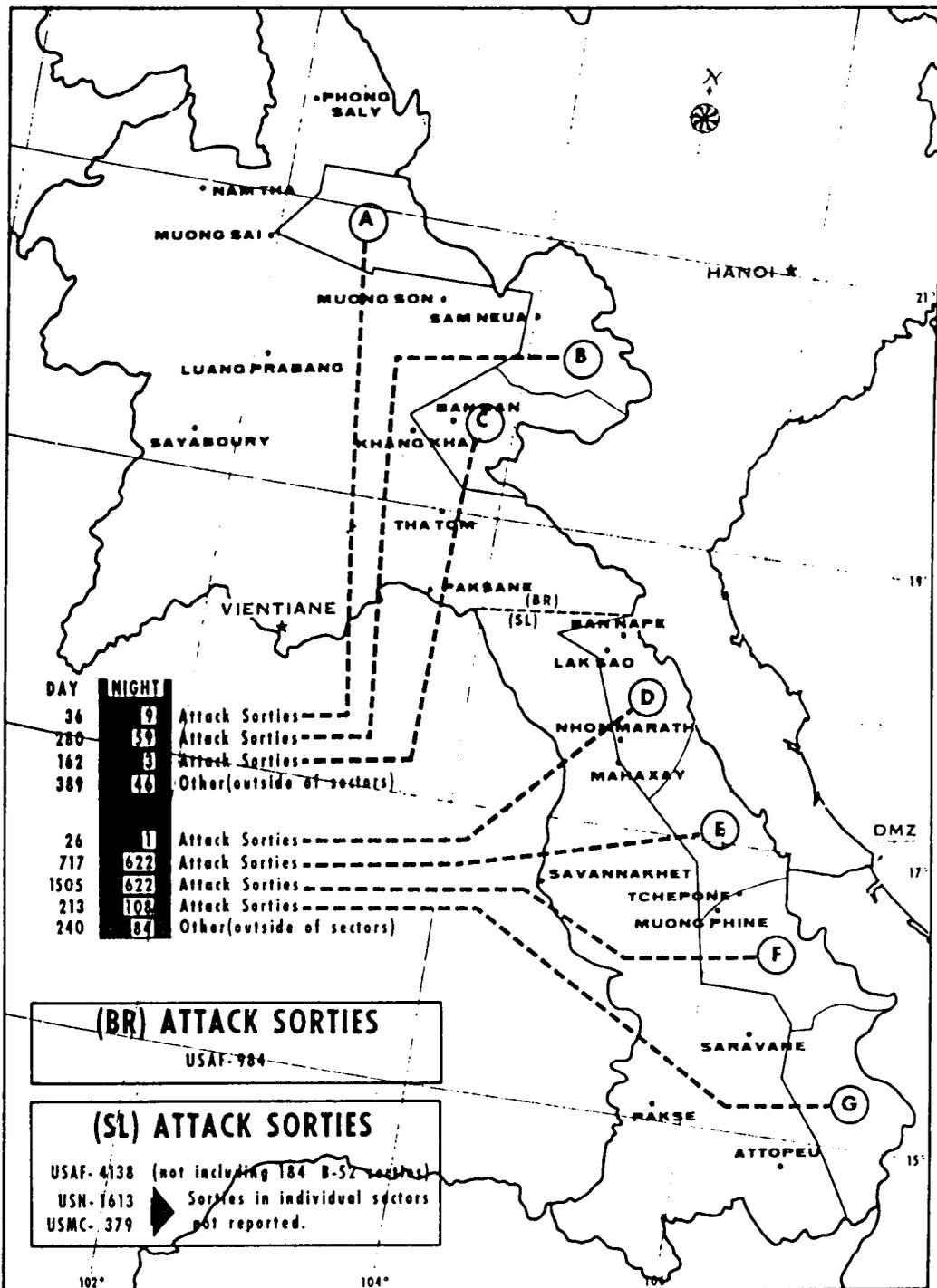
	<u>STEEL TIGER (SL)</u>			<u>SL</u> <u>TOTAL</u>	<u>BARREL ROLL (BR)</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>%*</u>
	<u>USAF</u>	<u>USN</u>	<u>USMC</u>		<u>USAF</u>	<u>USN/ USMC</u>		
<u>1968</u>								
Jan	4986	1887	379	7252	798	0	8050	+19
Feb	4050	905	106	5062	995	0	6057	-25
Mar	4138	1613	379	6130	984	0	7114	+17
%	+2	+78	+258	+21	-1		+17	

SOURCE: OPREP-5

* The percentages in the right column compare that month's total sortie increase/decrease with the preceding month. Those at the foot of the columns compare Mar 68 to Feb 68 only.

The map on page 2-2 depicts attack sortie concentration by sector.

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Enemy vehicles and LOC^{1/} activity reported herein is for 26 Feb -
r 68. Battle damage assessment (BDA) figures included in the
ative are for the same period and therefore will not correlate
tly with the calendar month BDA tables on pages 2-6 and 2-10.
ences to February LOC and vehicle activity pertain to the four-
period beginning 26 February. Otherwise, sortie data pertains to
pecified calendar month. ~~REVIEW ON 22 3/1981~~ 24 AUG 1981

Lima Site 85, Tacan Channel 97, came under heavy attack on 10 March
as ultimately lost to the enemy on the morning of the 11th. The attack
at 1820H with heavy mortar shelling of the installation. By 1835 in-
g mortar fire had damaged one of the living quarters and the Operations
ing. From 2120 through the early morning hours of 11 March the situa-
continued to deteriorate. USAF personnel continued to operate equip-
to control strikes in the area until 0300. The enemy had claimed the
tions area by 0400. By 0640 the American Embassy, Vientiane, ordered
ation of U.S. personnel. Blindbat C-130 aircraft provided flare
rt throughout the night and at first light A-1Es were in the area
rafe enemy positions. Rescue helicopters arrived on the scene at
but were driven off by ground fire. Subsequent attempts to recover
vors were more successful. Of the 19 Americans present when the

3 1981

AF LOC Summaries for the period 26 Feb - 31 Mar 68 (does not
lude USN/USMC BDA).

[REDACTED]
23
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Attack began, 6 USAF and 2 personnel were recovered. 5 of the 6 USAF personnel were wounded and one of the wounded died enroute to Dorn. The remaining 11 Americans are presumed dead.

59.6% of all the NVN/Laos attack sorties flown this month struck targets in Laos. Steel Tiger 51.4%, Barrel Roll 8.2%.

Pilots and Roadwatch Teams (RWT) sighted 6166 and 6889 vehicles respectively. Photo recce flights revealed 17 additional vehicles, all in the Barrel Roll area. The total number of vehicles reported exceeds last month's activity by 48.1%; 13,072 vs 8825 (5 weeks compared to 4). Pilots attacked 4258 of the vehicles they sighted with the following results: 885 (14.3%) of those sighted destroyed, 146 (2.4%) probably destroyed, 49 (.8%) damaged, 1089 secondary fires and 1933 secondary explosions. These secondary fires and explosions pertain only to vehicle associated targets.

~~REVIEW ON 11 MAR 31 1989~~

Wattay Airfield at Vientiane was struck by a severe storm on 24 March. Gusts to 70 knots per hour caused damage to the following RLAF aircraft: 5 C-47s, 3 T-28s, 1 O-1 and 1 U-17.

The majority of Arc Light sorties again expended in the area immediately surrounding Khe Sanh (see South Vietnam chapter). 184 of these sorties dropped 5,234.57 tons of ordnance in Laos to interdict enemy infiltration routes and military positions. The number of sorties expending in Laos is a 19% increase compared to last month's 168.

264 Mark 36 Destructor weapons were expended in Laos, the majority expended in the SL area. 168 of the bombs were implanted along Route 9

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2-4

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near the Laos/RVN border. The remaining 72 were seeded in river crossings and near bridges of the Route 19 system in Barrel Roll. 735 Weapons are potentially active in SL, 96 in BR.

14 aircraft lost to combat causes in Laos is the highest number for a single month since hostilities began (see Aircraft Losses Section).

BARREL ROLL AIR STRIKE ACTIVITY

Barrel Roll (BR) attack sorties flown remain near last month's level (984 Mar - 995 Feb). It is significant to note that the support in defense of Site 85 peaked at 98 attack sorties flown on 11 March. Attacks were flown on succeeding days to destroy the abandoned location's facilities. ~~SECRET~~ ~~21, 1988~~

On 8 March 2 possible SAM launchings were reported at 2005N-10330E, southwest of Sam Neua. Pilots of 2 F-4Ds reported SAM radar homing and warning indications and of sighting 2 lights during evasive maneuvers. An EB-66 crew detected a Fan Song Radar active in the vicinity of 2013N-10420E on 11 March. The site would have been about 20NM from the aircraft's orbit position. Companion EB-66s jammed the site apparently providing adequate protection for the detecting aircraft.

SIGNIFICANT BDA BARREL ROLL

Following the fall of Lima Site 85 on 11 March air strikes were directed toward destruction of the captured facility. Attacks were continually hampered by weather and no significant BDA is available at this time.

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2-5

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20330-1000

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declassification
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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

13 JUN 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR AF/CHO

SUBJECT: US Air Force Project CHECO Report, "The Fall of Site 85," Dated
9 August 1968 - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

Subject report is unclassified. You should declassify any copies you may
be maintaining as classified. You may release the report in its entirety in
response to FOIA requests.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 697-6367.

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film?

Jean P. Smith
JEAN P. SMITH
Chief, Information Security
Office of the Assistant Inspector
General for Security

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