

Escalation of war straining N. Viets

SAIGON-The escalation of the Indochina War into three nations has put a severe strain on Communist manpower and cut North Vietnam's home defense force to only 15,000 regulars, U.S. military sources said Wednesday.

Communist forces were described as "really stretched to the limit" in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos with more than 186,000 North Vietnamese troops spread over the three-country theater of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

North Vietnamese commanders. military sources said, have committed about 30,000 men to counter South Vietnam's offensive against the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos while holding about 20,000 more in reserves outside North Vietnamese borders.

The achievements of the South Vietnamese offensive were reflected Wednesday in two developments: the moving of North Vietnamese supply lines westward, deeper into Laos away from the main South Vietnamese force and increasingly heavy pressures by Communist units on the Bolovens Plateau in extreme southern Laos.

Dispatches from the Laotian capital of Vientiane said Communist units had overrun five government outposts on the Bolovens Plateau and were in control of one part of the area bordering Cambodia and South Vietnam's Central Highlands.

The Communists were presumably moving to make greater use of the plateau as a link in the Ho Chi Minh Trail now that South Vietnam has cut the network farther north.

Some increase was reported in the flow of Communist trail traffic in Laos. South Vietnamese commanders believethey now have the initiative in Laos and a report late Wednesday night said South Vietnamese reinforcements-about 2,900

men and 20 to 30 tanks-were moving up to Quang Tri Province in South Vietnam opposite the Laos theater of operations. Sources declined to speculate on the significance of the move.

Poor flying weather Wednesday grounded almost all U.S. helicopter support for the 24,000 South Vietnamese troops operating in Laos and ground activity remained at a low level.

U.S. warplaned attacking Ho Chi Minh Trail targets Tuesday knocked out five Soviet-built tanks, American headquarters in Saigon reported.

make "the greatest national sacrifices" if

the United States amd its allies expanded

indicated, however, that thy actual

fighting would be left to the North

Vietnamese and other Indochinese

Wording of the communique

Communists unless the situation should

The communique was issued by the

Peking and Hanoi governments in the

wake of the visit by Chinese Communist

Premier Chou En-lai to thy North

It coincided with a statement by

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, ousted

Cambodian chief of state, that Red China

was ready to send volunteers to fight in

the war into Indochina.

Vietnamese capital.

Red China declares

support of N. Viets

Vietnam Wednesday it was prepared to Cambodian or Laotian leftists.

TOKYO-Communist China declared Indochina, but only if Peking was directly

in a joint communique with North asked to do so by Vietnamese,

Senate votes 94-0 to pass lowered voting amendment

WASHINGTON-The Senate unanimously approved Wednesday a constitutional amendment which would lower the voting age to 18 in all elections-from City Hall to the White

If it is approved by the House next week, as is expected, 38 states must then ratify the amendment before it can become part of the constitution. All 50 legislatures are meeting this year, although some have already compiled their sessions.

The Senate approved the amendment 94 to 0 after only brief debate and sidetracked any riders which could have jeopardized passage.

By a 68-23 vote, the Senate killed a rider, offered by Sen, Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., which would have granted full congressional representation to the District of Columbia in both the House and Senate

Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield reluctantly moved to table the Kennedy proposal, warning it would touch off a filibuster that could delay passage of the 18-year-old vote amendment.

Congress last year passed legislation giving 18-year-olds the right to vote in all elections but the Supreme Court partially

Sihanouk made the statement in an

The text of the Peking-Hanoi

statement was broadcast by the official

New China News Agency and was heard

road of expanding its war of aggression in

Indochina, the Chinese people are

determined to take all necessary

measures, not flinching from even the

greatest national sacrifices, to give all out

support and assistance to the Vietnamese

and other Indochinese peoples for the

thorough defeat of the U.S. aggressors,"

"Should U.S. imperialism go down the

interview with the French leftist

magazine, Africasia,

the communique said.

in Tokyo.

nullified the action by ruling that Congress could not legislate voting qualifications for state and local

That left the states facing the costly and confusing prospect of setting up dual election machinery so voters between 18 and 21 could vote in federal elections but not state and local contests.

To avoid this, congressional leaders decided to expedite a constitutional amendment to permit some 11.5 million youths between 18 and 21 to vote in all contests before the 1972 elections.

Sen, Thomas F. Eagleston, D-Mo., and Kennedy joined in pleading for the addition of a constitutional amendment giving District of Columbia residents a full voice in Congress, Eagleton said more youths from the district have been killed in Vietnam than those from nine of the states and that district residents paid \$345 million in federal taxes last year.

Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield moved reluctantly to kill the Kennedy proposal for fear it would delay approval of the 18-year-old vote.

Mansfield said it was no secret that many members of both the Senate and the House would insist that such a proposal "undergo exhaustive examination and have at least full benefit of committee consideration before allowing it to come to a vote."

Denies ordering deaths

Medina refutes Calley

FT. BENNING, Ga.-The two central figures in the massacre at My Lai came face-to-face Wednesday in a tiny, hushed military courtroom where Capt. Ernest L. Medina firmly denied he ordered Lt. William L. Calley Jr. to "kill or waste Vietnamese people."

The testimony struck at the heart of Calley's defense that he was merely following Medina's orders when he and his men slaughtered villagers who were delaying an American military sweep through the Vietnamese hamlet of My Lai on March 16, 1968.

Medina, wearing his Silver and Bronze Star ribbons on his tunic, took the stand even before court started Wednesday, stepping into the witness box and smiling and speaking to a court reporter. It was the grim recital of the campaign at My

Calley is accused of the murder of 102 villagers at My Lai, and is on trial for his life. Medina, too, is charged with 102 killings during the operation and also could be put to death if found guilty at a later court-martial,

Holding a tiny microphone in his hand, the swarthy captain told in a steady voice of the events leading up to My Lai, of a briefing he gave his men on the eve of the assault, and of the attack itself.

Col. Reid W. Kennedy, the military judge, was the only one to interrupt with questions, and specifically wanted to know about the briefing Medina had given his men.

"Were any questions asked of you by the troops?" Kennedy queried. "Yes, sir," Medina, a 34-year-old Army veteran, replied.

"I was asked, 'Do we kill women and children?" "

"What was your answer?"

"My reply to that was, 'No,' I told them, 'You do not kill women and children. You must use common sense, If they have a weapon and try to engage you, you may shoot back, but you must use common sense."

"At any time on March 15 or March 16, 1968, did you order or direct Lt. Calley to kill or waste any Vietnamese "No, sir," Medina replied.

Calley sat motionless, his arms resting on the table as Medina-a man a psychiatrist said Calley regarded almost as a father-contradicted the main thrust of Calley's earlier testimony.

Medina was called by the jury to tell his side of the My Lai incident after the prosecution and the defense wound up their cases. The case is expected to go to the jury the week after next, following final arguments.

Anti-war show forced to use coffee house

FAYETTEVILLE-U.S. District Court attempt to get the ban overturned. Judge Algernon Butler Wednesday denied a restraining order to a group that wanted soldiers' anti-war group which is to use Cumberland County Auditorium for a controversial anti-war show Saturday and Sunday, featuring Jane Fonda, Donald Sutherland and other well-known entertainers.

The ruling will force the group to open its nationwide tour at a local coffee house for servicemen which seats only 400 persons. Two attempts to gain permission to stage the show at Ft. Bragg were turned back by the post's commander, Lt. Gen. John J. Tolson, who termed its contents "a clear danger to the loyalty, discipline and morale of the troops."

Some 1,770 troops at the base had signed petitions asking that the show be permitted at the base. Those petitions were turned over to U.S. Rep. Bella S. Abzug, D-N.Y., a Vietnam war critic, Tuesday.

She promised to attempt to contact Tolson and Army Secretary Resor in an The U.S. Serviceman's Fund, a sponsoring the show here, had hoped to use Cumberland County Auditorium for the show if it could not be held at Ft. Bragg. Auditorium officials denied permission, however, and the group filed suit, claiming the officials had discriminated against the entertainers and violated their First Amendment right of

Butler ruled Wednesday that the auditorium's rules which prohibit rock shows and similar attractions in the auditorium portion of the two-building complex, are "reasonable."

Such shows are normally staged in an adjoining arena, but that will be used for circus performances this weekend. Organizers of the show have admitted it has an anti-war tone, "with obviously a strong element about how absurd the (Southeast Asia) war is," but deny it is a political anti-war rally.

Soviet Jews try hunger sit-in

MOSCOW-More than 100 angry Jews crowded into the Soviet Parliament building Wednesday and tried to stage a sit-in hunger strike to back their demands for permission to go to Israel, Soviet police drove them out more than five hours later as they prayed in a darkened

The group of 110 persons from six Soviet cities sat down in the reception hall of the Supreme Soviet Parliament less than 100 yards across Karl Marx Street from the Kremlin.

Their demonstration began at 2 p.m. after a group of Latvian Jews from Riga visited headquarters of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and had their appeal for permission to emigrate to Israel rejected.

"We have been fighting this fight for 15 years," one of the strikers said, "Many of us have lost our jobs and been thrown out of schools because we wanted to go to Israel. We will demand that we be allowed to go to our homeland"

Members of the group said police burst into thy parliamentary hall at about 7:30 p.m. (11:30 EST). Authorities had turned off the lights and blocked off the building

A woman, who was in the reception hall said a man in a militia police general's uniform threatened the Jews with arrest if they did not leave "in two minutes."

"The lights were off, and we sat there in the dark," she said. "One young man said prayers in Hebrew, and another granslated into Russian,"

Then, she said, scores of uniformed and plainclothes policemen crowded into thy room,

"They surrounded us, and began pulling out the benches we were sitting on," she said. "They started pushing us, and what could we do, we had to leave."

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