

Rea

By STEWART KEEL
 QUANG TRI, VIETNAM
 (UPI) — Ba-room
 room!

The wood and plaster
 racks building shook and
 the metal bunk beds rocked
 from side to side.

"Incoming! Incoming!" an
 anxious GI cried out early
 Thursday as he slapped his
 palms against the barracks
 walls at the U.S. military
 compound at Quang Tri.

It took a second or two for the

They could



Fleeing in desperation with children and belongings, refugees head south on Highway 1 from the contested city of Quang Tri. A Communist pullback Friday allowed an estimated 10,000 more refugees to escape. (UPI)

Thousands Flee Southward to Hue

SAIGON (UPI) — Vietnamese refugees jammed the "Street Without Joy" Friday, trying desperately to outdistance the Communist offensive.

Tens of thousands were reported en route down Highway 1 from the northernmost capital city of Quang Tri to Hue, 35 miles to the south.

The French called the highway the "Street Without Joy" because of the thousands of casualties they suffered while fighting up and down it from 1947 to 1954.

Some of the refugees from Quang Tri traveled by bus, jeep, truck, on bicycles or in ox carts. Others walked, their belongings piled on their heads.

Escape from the besieged provincial capital was no automatic ticket to safety.

On Thursday, three escape trucks hit land mines four miles south of Quang Tri, killing 30 persons and wounding another 40.

Victims included a boy who sat dazed in the sand along the side of the road, his hair partly burned, his mouth open in disbelief and his legs and face grimy from war.

On Friday, the Communists pulled back long enough to let an estimated 10,000 refugees

down Highway 1.

Reports from Hue said the trickle of refugees had turned into a flood by Friday night, with thousands more still on the road leading into the old Imperial capital, scene of 24 days of heavy fighting during the 1968 Tet offensive.

Refugees were jammed into the University of Hue and other schools, living and sleeping in classrooms. Huntley estimated they had already doubled the city's normal population of 150,000.

Their next move was up to Communist troops who overran the protecting artillery fire bases of Bastogne and Checkmate, only 12 miles to the southwest, early Friday.

In the central highlands, believed to be another key target of the Communist offensive, thousands of other refugees have taken over schools in the provincial capital of Kontum.

In the adjoining highlands provincial capital of Pleiku, the families of South Vietnamese armed forces were being evacuated in government planes.

One report said the well-dressed evacuees, apparently the wives of officers, were taking with them such items as electric fans and motorbikes.

But Road Still Cut

By SPEC. 4 ALLEN SCHAEFER

LAI KHE, Vietnam—A three-mile stretch of Highway 1 about 10 miles south of An Loc, held by North Vietnamese Army troops dug into one-man bunkers, has blocked road traffic against opening the highway to the embattled city a top American official said Sunday.

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U.S. adv.
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Now, they w
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 screaming rockets, m
 artillery all over again.

Sketchy reports bega
 ing into the compound. A
 Vietnamese infantry regi
 was attacking from the sou
 west. Another infantry regimen
 was coming from the northwest.
 A Communist artillery regiment
 was in charge of the shelling.

One report said the Communists had blown up the bridge over the Thach Han River, cutting off Quang Tri City from the embattled combat base. A reporter hitchhiked over to the bridge, a half mile southwest of Quang Tri, to take a look.

The gray wooden span, built by U.S. Navy Seabees two years ago, was still standing, but towering clouds of gray-black smoke could be seen to the south over the combat base, headquarters for South Vietnamese Marines.

The reporter hitched a lift in a South Vietnamese ambulance, sitting in a puddle of blood, onto the outskirts of the smoking combat base.

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ostly

the battle

city in

Cambodian

wounded, the

high command re

Friday night.

Communist casualties, a high

command spokesman said, were

known. Two hours after the

battle ended Svay Riens, which

has been under siege for a week,

was hit by a single Soviet-made

122mm rocket, which did no

damage, the spokesman said.

He added that one Cambodian

soldier was killed and four

wounded during a clash Satur

day morning north of Prey

Veng, another province capital

23 miles southeast of Phnom

Penh, which has likewise been

under siege for a week.

Communist casualties were

not known, the spokesman said.

For most of the past week, the

high command had termed the

situation at both cities as

"serious."

\$3.50 Rooms For Marines

WASHINGTON (Special) — Whether swooping from the south, on leave from the west, or just on a layover, there's place in the nation's capital where enlisted Marines can find lodging for \$3.50 a night.

This bargain can be found at the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen's (SSMA) Club. And if you want a limited hankroll, you can find hamburgers for 30 cents or a cube steak with all the fixings for \$1 in the Club's cafeteria-style dining room. All this with no tipping allowed.

The SSMA Club is open to all enlisted men on active duty. It's ideally located with bus terminals within walking distance, Washington's National Airport a short taxi drive away, and many of the capital's points of interest nearby.

If Washington is in your plans, the SSMA Club should be included. Reservations can be obtained by writing Mrs. William H. Beard, SSMA Club Manager, 1018 L Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20001. If you want to call, the number is Area Code 202, 234-0141.

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Deadly Cobras Spit Destruction on Reds

By SPEC. 4 ALLEN SCHAEFER
 Staff Correspondent

BIEN HOA, Vietnam — The Cobra helicopter is like a snake. It is a deadly chopper that screams out of the clouds spitting a red hot venom of rockets and bullets. A Cobra's fangs are 17-pound rockets, a 40mm grenade launcher and miniguns that stick out of its mouth.

Fearing by the Communists because of the havoc it wreaks on men and material, the snakes' job today is to cover tiny light observation choppers that skim the treetops sniffing out the enemy.

As an early morning sun climbs in a clear sky east of Bien Hoa, a team heads out to check a landing zone before a flight of Hueys thrusts in American Rangers on a combat assault.

While the little, egg-shaped loach skitters along the treetops

looking for tracks or a glint of metal, the Cobra hangs overhead, waiting to bite.

After a 10-minute search which also brings into action two more Cobras from the 229th Assault Helicopter Bn., which "roll in" and pound the LZ, the area is declared "clear."

Now the Hueys pop into the landing zone and discharge their passengers.

It was an easy mission. No ground fire. No balls of flak bursting around the choppers. No 51 cal. rounds whizzing past the cockpit like they did at An Loc, when F Troop, 9th Cav., did battle with the Communists there.

Capt. Donald R. Gooch, the Cobra platoon leader, leans casually against his snake, his black cavalry hat pulled jauntily down over his eyes. It was an easy mission today. Maybe tomorrow will be different. Maybe it'll be An Loc again.