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DAILY INTERNAL INFORMATION SUMMARY NO. 04-24

MRB FORCES CAME UNDER ONE OF THEIR HEAVIEST ENEMY ASSAULTS IN WEEKS THURSDAY DURING A DAY-LANG BATTLE ON THE BA LAI RIVER LESS THAN THREE MILES SOUTHWEST OF THE MRB ANCHORAGE.

TEN PERSONNEL WERE KILLED IN THE FIGHTING, INCLUDING SIX ARMY, TWO NAVY AND TWO VIETNAMESE. ANOTHER 109 WERE WOUNDED, INCLUDING 70 ARMY PERSONNEL, 37 NAVY AND TWO MARINES. A TOTAL OF 21 VC HAD BEEN CONFIRMED KIA AS OF 2000, BUT CONTINUING ENEMY FIRE PROHIBITED A FURTHER SEARCH FOR ENEMY BODIES. SIXTEEN OF THE VC KIA WERE ACCOUNTED FOR BY GUNSHIPS AND THE OTHER FIVE BY 4/47 BATTALION WHICH ALSO TOOK ONE PRISONER.

THE FIGHTING BROKE OUT AT 0845 WHEN A COLUMN OF TROOPCARRYING RIVER DIVISION 92 BOATS WERE HIT FROM BOTH BANKS OF THE NARROW SONG BA LAI BY A VICIOUS BARRAGE OF ENEMY ROCKET, RECOILLESS RIFLE

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AND AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE.

THE BOATS WERE HIT FROM HEAVILY FORTIFIED ENEMY BUNKERS JUST AS THEY WERE MOVING IN TO BEACH AND UNLOAD THE EMBARKED TROOPS OF 3/47 INFANTRY BATTALION.

FIVE PERSONNEL WERE KILLED AND MORE THAN 60 WERE WOUNDED IN THIS ORIGINAL ASSAULT, WITH THE HEAVY FIGHTING CONTINUING THROUGHOUT THE DAY. TWO NAVYMEN ABOARD MONITOR 92-2 WERE KILLED AND TWO OTHERS WERE WOUNDED AS A RESULT OF A RPG-7 ROCKET ROUND WHICH EXPLODED IN THE COXSWAIN'S FLAT. TWENTY-THREE OTHER NAVYMEN FROM EIGHT RIV DIV 92 BOATS WERE ALSO INJURED IN THIS INITIAL ATTACK. OTHER BOATS BESIDES MONITOR 92-2 WHICH TOOK CASUALTIES WERE MONITOR 92-1, ASPB'S 92-1 AND 92-4, AND ATC'S 92-2, 92-3, 92-5, 92-6, AND 92-7.

AFTER THE FIRST TWO HOURS OF HEAVY FIGHTING, ENEMY RESISTANCE SLACKED OFF TO STEADY HARRASSING .50 CALIBER MACHINE GUN AND SMALL ARMS FIRE. BUT, AT ABOUT 1230, SIX CREWMEN ABOARD MONITOR 91-3 WERE WOUNDED IN A ROCKET AND AUTOMATIC WEAPONS ATTACK.

ANOTHER NAVYMAN ABOARD ATC 92-10 WAS CRITICALLY WOUNDED AT 1620 WHEN A B-40 ROCKET ROUND EXPLODED IN THE BOAT'S WELL DECK. THE BLAST ALSO FURTHER INJURED A NUMBER OF WOUNDED ARMY PERSONNEL THE BOAT

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~~THE CRAFT~~ WAS CARRYING.

MOST OF THE ARMY CASUALTIES WERE TROOPS EMBARKED IN THE ASSAULT CRAFT, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS LIGHT CONTACT REPORTED IN GROUND ACTION EARLY IN THE EVENING.

ALL SHIPS OF THE MRB EXCEPT APL-26, WHICH IS COMPLETING REPLACEMENT OF ITS GENERATORS AT DONG TAM, SHIFTED ANCHORAGE THURSDAY MORNING TO SIX MILES EAST OF MY THO. THE MOVE WAS COMPLETED BY 0830.

THE MRF WAS VISITED THURSDAY BY MAJOR GENERAL THANH, COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE IV CORPS; MAJOR GENERAL ECKHART, SENIOR ADVISER, IV CORPS; AND MAJOR GENERAL HAY, DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL, TWO FIELD FORCES.

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TOD: 04/1450Z/YAPD

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