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Reds Continue Attacks Upon U. S. Troops

SAIGON (AP) — North Vietnamese troops entrenched in bunkers kept up attacks today on American infantrymen trying to reach the wreckage of a U.S. helicopter southwest of Da Nang.

A U.S. spokesman estimated that the lead column of 400 men from the 196th Light Infantry Brigade was about 800 yards from the site where the North Vietnamese shot down the helicopter Tuesday.

DRAW FIRE

"Every time they start moving, they draw fire," said one U.S. officer.

"I've never seen the enemy fight so hard," said another. "Ordinarily they'll fight for awhile and then pull back, but these guys are standing their ground and fighting."

Dive bombers and helicopter gunships made attack after attack on the North Vietnamese bunkers.

For three days, more than 1,000 North Vietnamese troops have blocked American efforts to reach the crash site in the rolling foothills 31 miles southeast of Da Nang.

Among the eight men aboard the helicopter were Associated Press photographer Oliver Noonan of Norwell, Mass., and Lt. Col. Eli P. Howard Jr. of Woodbridge, Va., a battalion commander. All eight men are believed dead.

The drive to reach the wreckage has become the focus of the hard fighting that has been raging in the area since Sunday. U.S. spokesmen claim that at least 469 North Vietnamese have been slain, many by a massive rain of bombs, napalm, rockets and artillery shells.

More than 1,200 U.S. infantrymen, Marines and South Vietnamese soldiers have been thrown into the fighting. Associated Press correspondent Richard Pyle reported from the area that 35 Americans have been killed, 10 are missing and more than 150 are wounded.

As the Communist command's fall campaign entered its 11th day, U.S. headquarters reported more than 20 enemy rocket and mortar attacks during the night.

The most damaging hit Duc Pho, a district town 100 miles southeast of Da Nang. A U.S. spokesman said 10 mortar rounds landed in the town, and initial reports indicated 10 Vietnamese civilians were killed and 60 were wounded.

As the Communist command's fall campaign entered its 11th day, the allied commands reported 25 enemy mortar and rocket attacks since 8 a.m. Thursday, with two Americans killed and 72 wounded.

Ten 100-pound rockets slammed into the U.S. air base at Da Nang, killing one American, wounding 42 and