'REACTION' STRIKES CALLED COVER-UP

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Ex-Intelligence Aide Says His Unit Planned Such Raids on North in '70 NYTimes-

> By SEYMOUR M. HERSH Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 14 -A former photo-intelligence specialist for the Seventh Air Force in Vietnam said today that in 1970 his top-secret unit planned a number of bombing strikes into North Vietnam that a few days later were publicly described by the Air Force as, "protective reaction."

Michael A. Lewis, 25 years old, of Ann Arbor, Mich., who spent nearly four years in the Air Force-one year at Seventh Air Force headquarters in Saigon-said in a telephone interview that "we knew we weren't supposed to do it, except we were told that orders had come from the Pentagon."

Mr. Lewis, a former sergeant, is now a student at the University of Michigan. He said he served as a photo interpreter with the 12th Reconnaissance Intelligence Technical Squadron at Tansonnhut air field from June, 1969, to June, 1970.

Mr. Lewis's name and address were supplied to The New York Times by a military source who formerly worked with the 432d Photo Intelligence Squadron stationed at Udon Air Force Base in Thailand.

Another intelligence sergeant Continued on Page 4, Column 4

from that Squadron reported 15A and 15B that run into several days later the newspafrom that Squanon leads to last February that he had been ordered to falsify documents concerning air strikes over North Vietnam. That led to the storage areas 5 to 20 miles inside North Vietnam near the leads in March of Gen. John side North Vietnam near the leads in large late in 1970, is now a regional coordinator for Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Spokesman Won't Comment

asked about Mr. Lewis's state-ments, declined official comment. One military officer said, however: "The guy is out of the service and he may or may not be correct. If there is

General Lavelle was retired and demoted after an Air Force investigator concluded that he tance during the interview. All Mr. Hancock. Air Force officials officially reported as "protective reaction" raids—that is, classified information.

A similar account of the so-Lewis were critical of the overraids initiated by United States aircraft in response to enemy actions. Such raids have been wa provided today, also in a conducted over North Vietnam telephone interview, by a "We used to just inflate all operations."

gators although he once wrote lature, said he served as photo-amount of supplies. We knew it to a Senator about the matter. He declined to identify the Sen-

He said his duties with the 12th Reconnaissance Squadron ally among the pilots, was very much of a joke," the former cap and analysis of all reconnaistance of the state of the sance films made over North

In the case of those strikes In the case of those strikes out and bomb North vVietnam ordered directly by the Seventh all of the time." Air Force command, Mr. Lewis said, he would provide first-hand target selection—that is, he would cull from the photo-game," said Mr. Mundt, who

Incidents 'Ever So Often'

"I know for a fact that be-with a fore I left in 1970 we were strike." preplanning targetas inside North Vietnam," Mr. Lewis said. one incident he said had been "That means we got an order related to him by pilots, infrom the generals at the Sev-volving an attack by six fighterenth Air Force to plan targets bombers on a surface-to-air in North Vietnam. Later we missile site in North Vietnam. would read about it in the press "The fighters were circling as 'protective reaction' strikes over Laos," he said. "The un-It was the same thing they say armed reconnaissance plane General Lavelle did."

demilitarized zone.
"In practice," Mr. Lewis said,

"protective reaction normally A Pentagon spokesman, when meant dropping bombs to pro-ked about Mr. Lewis's state, tect an aircraft that was fired was stationed at Udorn in 1970, upon, but in effect it was used to cover up preplanned bombing strikes in North Vietnam."

enough evidence that warrants the former sergeant, now a raids over Laos and North an investigation, I'm sure the prelaw student, said. "We just Vietnam and bomb the hell out assumed ti was semething they of them." weren't telling epopel about."

ordered at least 20 unauthor-ized strikes into North Vietnam personnel are expressedly confirm today that Mr. Lewis ized strikes into North Vietnam personnel are expressedly confirm today that Mr. Lewis from November, 1971, to March warned before leaving the arme had served on active duty, but of this year. The strikes were services of the possible Fed-the former sergeant said he had

telephone interview, by a "We used to just inflate al former Air Force Captain Gary of the statistics all the time,"

graphic service officer with the wasn't accurate but we really 432d Squadron at Udon in 1969 didn't care." and 1970.

"Protective reaction, especisance films made over North a set-up thing. It was one of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. the outs that allowed us to go

'Like a Chess Game'

graphs likely targets for United also is a delegate for Senator States bombers. As such, his George McGovern to the Demo-work required the highest se-curity clearances. "We picked the time. If we decided we should show a little strength, we'd come around protective reaction

Mr. Mundt specifically cited

went in and overflew a SAM Mr. Lewis said such incidents site. It was obvious that they "would happen ever so often" knew a missile would be fired. As soon as it was, the recon-

Continued From Page 1, Col. 5 had planned for two strikes naissance plane flew out and "The targets were up on Route the bombers went in. Of course,

nam Veterans Against the War.

Edward L. Hancock, another former Air Force officer who was interviewed by telephone at Kansas City, Mo.

o cover up preplanned bombng strikes in North Vietnam."
"We Knew It Was Wrong"
"We knew it was wrong,"
"We knew it was wrong,"

The Official Air Force Regis-Mr. Lewis spoke with relucter lists both Mr. Mundt and

assified information.

A similar account of the so-Lewis were critical of the over-

Mr. Lewis, in discussing the planning of bombing strikes, said he had never been approached by military investigators although he once wrotel later and a proceeding of the colorado legis
Tormer Air Force Captain Gary

Mr. Lewis said. Speaking of Mr. Mundt, now an antiwar pilots, he said: "They would activist and a Democratic can report destroying a certain didate for the Colorado legis
number of trucks or a certain number of trucks or a certain said he served as photo-lamount of symplics. We knew it