

PRESIDENT WARNS HANOI NOT TO MOVE EQUIPMENT SOUTH

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Hints at Resumption of U.S.
Bombing if North Should
'Disregard' His Words

HIS DECLARATION IS FIRM

He Says Views Have Been
Made Known to Hanoi and
'Interested Parties'

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WASHINGTON, March 15—
President Nixon voiced concern
today about the movement of
North Vietnamese military
equipment toward South Viet-
nam and said Hanoi should not
"lightly disregard" his words.

The President's statement
was interpreted by members of

*Transcript of news conference
is printed on Page 22. **

the White House staff and the
diplomatic community as an
unmistakable warning to the
North Vietnamese that they
were risking a resumption of
American bombing.

Speaking at an unscheduled
news conference in the West
Wing of the White House, Mr.
Nixon disclosed that he had
conveyed his concern to North
Vietnam and to "other inter-
ested parties"—presumably in-
cluding China and the Soviet
Union.

Stresses His Concern

The President then added,
choosing his words carefully
and speaking in the solemn,
modulated voice that he often
uses to make important foreign
policy pronouncements:

"Based on my actions over
the past four years, the North
Vietnamese should not lightly
disregard such expressions of
concern, when they are made
with regard to a violation.

"That is all I will say about
it." [Question 3, Page 22.]

What Mr. Nixon has done in
the past when his warnings

went unheeded, White House
staff members pointed out,
has been to take compensatory
and often dramatic military
action, such as bombing North
Vietnam and mining its har-
bors.

Nixon Called Reluctant

But the officials also said
the President had become ex-
tremely reluctant to make
such moves in the two weeks
remaining until all American
prisoners of war are scheduled
to be released and even in the
months beyond that time.

"We still think that if we
are firm they will come
around," said one Nixon asso-
ciate. "We are not looking for
an excuse to resume bombing.
Quite the contrary, we will do
it only if North Vietnam be-
haves like a complete bandit."

One problem that Mr. Nixon
would not like to confront,
another Administration source
suggested, is the creation of
new prisoners of war, through
the downing of American
planes, just when the other
prisoners had come home.

Mr. Nixon's remarks came in
response to questions from re-
porters jammed into the White
House briefing room for the
President's third news confer-

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* White House transcript, filed Watergate.

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ence this year, his second in
two weeks. The President, who
wore a light blue suit and tie,
submitted to a wide range of
questions for 40 minutes.

His comments about North
Vietnam brought a new inten-
sity to a recent series of Ad-
ministration complaints about
Hanoi's conduct.

Until last weekend, officials
had expressed nothing but con-
fidence that the Vietnam cease-
fire, which went into effect on
Jan. 28, would work.

But then White House offi-
cials let it be known that Ad-
ministration support for a pro-
gram of postwar aid to Vietnam
depended upon Hanoi's willing-
ness to cease infiltration of the
South and to withdraw its
forces from Laos quickly.

Early this week, Pentagon
and White House spokesmen
voiced concern over what they
described as the movement of
30,000 North Vietnamese troops,
300 tanks and other military
equipment South in apparent
violation of the cease-fire ac-
cords.

Even as the President was
speaking, American officials
were meeting in Paris with
North Vietnamese representa-
tives to discuss postwar aid, a
development that suggested
that the two sides had not yet
approached the breaking point.

Difficulty Is Noted

Mr. Nixon preceded his warn-
ing to Hanoi with the com-
ment—a repetition of his re-
marks at a news conference
on March 2—that in any guer-
rilla war, minor shooting viola-
tions of a cease-fire were all
but inevitable.

He also suggested that the

reports of troop infiltration
were somewhat untrustworthy,
adding that "they could be
simply replacement personnel"
for the 145,000 North Vietnam-
ese troops already in South
Vietnam. Such replacements
are permitted by the accords.

"We are primarily concerned
about the equipment," the
President declared. [Question 4.]

Under the agreement, as Mr.
Nixon pointedly noted, only
replacement gear may be
moved into South Vietnam. The
recently reported movements
of equipment, he said, appeared
to be "exceeding the amounts
that were agreed upon."

The President said the United
States had complained to the
International Commission of
Control and Supervision, as
well as other parties. [Ques-
tion 5.]