

Joint Chiefs' Order to Begin Bombing of Hanoi's Oil Facilities

Joint Chiefs of Staff's cablegram to Adm. U. S. Grant Sharp, commander in chief of Pacific forces, June 22, 1966, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study.

Strikes to commence with initial attacks against Haiphong and Hanoi POL on same day if operationally feasible. Make maximum effort to attain operational surprise. Do not conduct initiating attacks under marginal weather conditions but reschedule when weather assures success. Follow-on attacks authorized as operational and weather factors dictate.

At Haiphong, avoid damage to merchant shipping. No attacks authorized on craft unless US aircraft are first fired on and then only if clearly North Vietnamese. Piers servicing target will not be attacked if tanker is berthed off end of pier.

Decision made after SecDef and CJCS were assured every feasible step would be taken to minimize civilian casualties would be small [sic]. If you do not believe you can accomplish objective

while destroying targets and protecting crews, do not initiate program. Take the following measures; maximum use of most experienced ROLLING THUNDER personnel, detailed briefing of pilots stressing need to avoid civilians, execute only when weather permits visual identification of targets and improved strike accuracy, select best axis of attack to avoid populated areas, maximum use of ECM to hamper SAM and AAA fire control, in order to limit pilot distraction and improve accuracy, maximum use of weapons of high precision delivery consistent with mission objectives, and limit SAM and AAA suppression to sites located outside populated areas.

Take special precautions to insure security. If weather or operational considerations delay initiation of strikes, do not initiate on Sunday, 26 June.