

# U.S. SAYS BIG RAIDS IN NORTH ARE OVER

Officials Stress That There  
May Be Smaller Strikes  
if Flights Are Periled

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WASHINGTON, May 4—The Defense Department announced today it had "terminated" large scale air raids mounted in recent days against three areas of North Vietnam.

But Pentagon officials stressed that smaller air strikes might be conducted in the future if American reconnaissance flights over North Vietnam were attacked.

For the first time, the Pentagon acknowledged that the raids north of the demilitarized zone over the weekend had been larger in scope than any since the bombing halt in November, 1968, and that so-called "logistics support" facilities for air defense had been struck in addition to anti-aircraft gun and missile sites.

### 3 Areas Attacked

The Defense Department said that from 50 to more than 100 planes had been employed in each of the strikes near Barthelemy Pass, Ban Karai Pass and in an area immediately north of the demilitarized zone. Barthelemy Pass, about 240 miles north of the demilitarized zone, is believed take the farthest point north raided by American aircraft since November, 1968.

All three areas, officials said, are key conduits for the flow of men and matériel to enemy military units throughout Indo-

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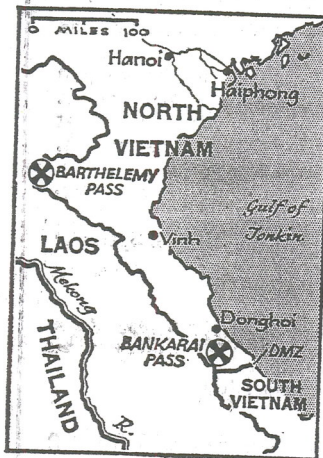
China, and especially in South Vietnam.

But the official statements left unresolved the question of whether supply depots, unrelated to air defense sites, had also been targets. When pressed on this question at a news briefing today Daniel Z. Henkin, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, said repeatedly: "The targets were anti-aircraft facilities and associated logistics support."

Mr. Henkin characterized the raids as "reinforced protective reaction strikes." He insisted that only three had been contemplated, and that since those had been successfully carried out no further such raids were contemplated.

### Laird Recalls Notice

"But I want to tell you again," he added, "that we are, of course, prepared as necessary to continue to protect our unarmed reconnaissance pilots." Emerging from a congressional hearing room, Defense Secret-



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ary Melvin R. Laird told reporters that at the time of the bombing halt, North Vietnam had put on notice that the United States insisted on the right to conduct aerial surveillance of enemy build-ups in the North would protect its aircraft. Air strikes, he said, will resume if North Vietnam attacks any of our aircraft flying reconnaissance missions."

Mr. Henkin conceded that the air raids had been authorized in Washington. Ronald L. Ziegler, White House press secretary, said that President Nixon had been aware of the strikes and "approved the over-all policy of protective reaction."

In the 18 months since the bombing halt, American commanders in the field have had authority, officials said, to attack air defense sites that fire on American reconnaissance planes. The commanders were not required to get specific Washington approval for "air suppression" missions against offending anti-aircraft installations.

### 60 Raids Reported

The Pentagon said that during this period 60 missions counting the most recent one had been carried out.

Pentagon spokesmen said that nine jets and one helicopter had been downed over North Vietnam since November, 1968. An additional plane was down in last week's raids. They conceded that there had been a recent increase in the downing of American reconnaissance planes over the North. American aircraft had been destroyed in the three months preceding last weekend's strikes.

But officials stressed that North Vietnam had been increasing its build-up of anti-aircraft sites in recent months.

Mr. Henkin insisted that in his view the recent raids represented "no change in policy." But, he added, "I will not quarrel that these attacks may have been larger than in the past."

Other sources said that anywhere from a half-dozen to two-dozen aircraft had normally been involved in so-called suppression or protective reaction missions in the past.

### Supply Depots Cited

Over the weekend, The New York Times quoted a reliable Administration source to the effect that the recent raids were directed in part at supply depots and "logistics lines."

One source was quoted as having said that "in the past, we couldn't touch" these supplies until they crossed the border into Laos.

"That was hard to take," the source continued. "The enemy had built up an awful lot of surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft along the northern reaches of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, waiting for us to come in."

The source said that President Nixon had approved the large-scale raids on supply bases and air defenses after his television address last Thursday, in which he announced that American troops would take part in an attack on enemy sanctuaries in Cambodia.

The "logistics support" associated with air defenses that Mr. Henkin cited apparently refers to such things as stocks of anti-aircraft ammunition and missiles, radar, power generators and other facilities required to operate the anti-aircraft sites.

Mr. Ziegler insisted that the recent raids did not constitute "a resumption of the bombing of the North."