

# Hanoi Says Soviet Ship In Harbor Was Struck

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By CRAIG R. WHITNEY  
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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Monday, April 17—The United States command announced today that American warplanes had attacked Hanoi and Haiphong yesterday and that two American planes had been shot down. Military authorities said the raids "on the outskirts of Hanoi" had heavily damaged North Vietnamese petroleum storage areas.

The Hanoi radio reported that a Soviet freighter in Haiphong harbor had been hit and an officer had been wounded. The last time a Russian was wounded by an American raid on Haiphong, in 1966, a major diplomatic crisis resulted.

According to the Hanoi radio, "waves of American planes" flew over the capital yesterday, dropping bombs and firing rockets inside the city and in its outskirts.

The United States command has released only a few details on the B-52 and fighter-bomber raids over Haiphong and Hanoi. It has said only that Air Force B-52's and Air Force and Navy fighter-bombers heavily damaged petroleum storage areas at Haiphong and that the smaller jets, but not the B-52's, struck at similar fuel facilities "on the outskirts of Hanoi."

Only two planes were lost, the command said. The Hanoi radio has said that 15 planes, including a B-52, were shot down, but the Americans say the '52's all returned safely.

The American command said that only the smaller, tactical aircraft, which attack by precision dive-bombing, had been used in the Hanoi area.

The North Vietnamese defenders reportedly fired about 200 surface-to-air missiles in addition to thousands of anti-aircraft shells. An American spokesman said one pilot had been rescued at sea. He identified the downed planes as a Navy A-7 attack aircraft and an Air Force F-105 Thunderchief.

Over-all, the spokesman said, the North Vietnamese appeared to have been caught by surprise and anti-aircraft missiles were fired erratically. He declined to expand his brief statement, the third issued by the American command on the raids in the last 24 hours.

An earlier statement had said only that the port of Haiphong had been bombed and that B-52's had been used in the raid.

The new raids over the North are clearly intended to blunt the setbacks to morale and the political situation in South Vietnam that have resulted from reverses at the hands of North Vietnamese ground forces.

The air raids were seen as a pointed reminder that while the ground war might be in the process of Vietnamization, the United States was still capable of inflicting damage and casualties on the North without committing its ground troops.

Earlier, the American command had identified two of the targets as Vinh and Baithuong, both of which have airfields at which MIG fighters are known to be based.

The Hanoi radio has given the only indications of exactly when the raids occurred—at 2 A.M. at Haiphong and 9:30 A.M. at Hanoi.

Before the B-52 raids near Haiphong, the big planes had

never flown north of the 20th Parallel because of the intense threat from anti-aircraft guns and missiles in the Hanoi-Haiphong area.

The United States command said that yesterday's raids were being conducted to "help reduce the enemy's military capability to continue his attacks in South Vietnam."

High American officials here implied earlier that the bombing was intended to lay down a direct and dramatic challenge to the North Vietnamese and to persuade the Soviet Union to stop supplying the North Vietnamese with war matériel.

These objectives are the same ones that former President Lyndon B. Johnson cited for the systematic bombing of North Vietnam that began in the mid-nineteen-sixties and was given up, in failure in November, 1968.

"All those shells and artillery and tanks the North Vietnamese are using in South Vietnam—some ship must have brought them in to Haiphong," an intelligence source said. "Haiphong is the only port of entry for those supplies, most of which come from the Soviet Union."

Officials interviewed here said that the decision to launch the first bombing raids since 1968 against Haiphong, North Vietnam's principal port, and Hanoi, had been made at a higher level in Washington, not here, though the military has had contingency plans to resume the bombing since it was suspended four years ago.

The decision to go ahead on such a dramatic scale appears to indicate a more serious American concern about South Vietnamese ability to withstand a long, drawn-out offensive than Americans have expressed publicly.

Intelligence sources here have emphasized that they expect the Communist drive to go on another month or two, and perhaps longer.

At the same time, one of these intelligence officials said in an interview, the enemy tanks and artillery regiments that have been pressing attacks in Quangtri, Kontum, and Binhlong provinces in South Vietnam were organized in the North and sent south months ago. A sudden shut-off of the supply pipeline in Hanoi, the official said, would not affect the North Vietnamese offensive near Saigon for months.

"The North Vietnamese appear to be using matériel that was delivered in Haiphong some time ago," one officer said. "It has nothing to do with recent arrivals of supplies in Haiphong."

The North Vietnamese have used Soviet-made T-54 heavy tanks both in Quangtri and Binhlong Provinces and have used Soviet surface-to-air missiles and long range 130-MM. artillery to defend their men on the Quangtri front. They also used 130-MM. artillery at the turn of the year in assaults on Long Tieng in northern Laos.

Maj. Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., President Nixon's deputy assistant for National Security, was in Saigon today and conferred with Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, Commander of United States Forces in Vietnam, on American military commander in the Pacific, Adm. John S. McCain Jr., is reported to be on his way to Saigon.