

Unworkable

Secret CIA Study on Bombing

Examiner News Services

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — Sen. Mike Gravel released secret documents today showing that the Central Intelligence Agency advised President Nixon in 1969 that mining North Vietnamese ports and bombing major rail arteries was an unworkable military action.

The Alaska Democrat read to the Senate portions of a national security memorandum in which the State Department, the CIA and the office of the Secretary of Defense advised against attempting to interdict supplies entering North Vietnam by land and sea.

Pessimistic Report

The CIA said the "multiplicity of modes of transport routes" in North Vietnam made it unlikely that B-52s and U.S. naval forces could shut off the flow of military supplies into Vietnam, Gravel said.

In addition, the CIA was pessimistic about the impact of interdicting rail lines. In one instance, it noted, a railroad bridge was destroyed by U.S. airpower and the North Vietnamese were still able to move 700 tons a day across the river by use of a ferry.

The State Department study said "in practical terms, it would be impossible to mine the harbors because North Vietnam had so many ports suitable for off-the-beach loading.

Pentagon Warns

After the President's speech last night, the Pentagon warned that if the Soviet Union and other arms suppliers to Hanoi tried to unload their freighters offshore, the United States would attempt to sink the shallow-draft lighters carrying goods from there to shore.

The office of the Secretary of Defense, Gravel said, concluded that a minimum of 6000 attack sorties a month would be required to close the two rail lines from China and the interdiction of the seven to 10-route road network from China would be still more difficult.

Gravel said the papers he read showed that the "entire intelligence gathering system of the United States" was against a blockade.

Kissinger Directs

The study Gravel read from was prepared under the direction of Dr. Henry Kissinger, the President's chief foreign policy adviser, at the outset of the Nixon Administration. Several newspapers have published other portions of the memorandum.

Gravel was blocked by Sen. Robert Griffin (R-Mich.) last week when he tried to have the full document printed in the Congressional Record. He came on the floor at 1:35 p.m. when

the Senate was in recess, obtained recognition when there was no other Senator present and began reading from the study.

Similar View

Meanwhile, the former head of the Defense Department's Vietnam Task Force, which produced the Pentagon Papers, gave similar testimony, saying bombing of the North Vietnamese ports will bring neither victory nor peace.

Dr. Leslie Gelb of the Brookings Institution told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that more bombing and mining would in time somewhat curtail Hanoi's offensive in the south but at the risk of again setting back U.S. relations with Russia and China and at the price of countless civilian lives.

More bombing in South Vietnam, he said, will impede Hanoi's offensive at the expense of killing or making refugees out of hundreds of thousands of people.

"What then is the purpose of such senseless slaughter?" asked Gelb.