

U.S. Bombs Dike Gates, Hanoi Says

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North Vietnam is now accusing the United States of using television and laser-controlled "smart" bombs to knock out sluice gates and repair centers for its dike system.

According to North Vietnam, the United States is now striking its dike maintenance system while denying it is engaging in any attacks on "dikes." Hanoi charges that this is a "mendacious" scheme to so weaken the dike system that when flooding develops during coming weeks it can be blamed on "natural calamity." North Vietnam is warning its farmers to "be ready to overcome the greatest difficulties."

The intensified charges about American bombing attacks on North Vietnam's dike system produced another Defense Department denial that U.S. aircraft are aiming at the dike complex.

Defense Department press spokesman Jerry W. Friedman said yesterday:

"The dike system of the North has not been targeted, as we said a number of times. I wouldn't want to guess about what might have happened to some (dikes), if in fact anything happened to them.

"We're obviously being treated to a kind of worldwide propaganda campaign on this subject in which the enemy may hope to explain the normal monsoon flooding by blaming it on us.

"It always floods during the monsoon in North Vietnam and it probably will again. We have not targeted dikes and we have no intention to do so."

North Vietnam has been intensifying its charges of U.S. attacks on its dike system, and conducting diplomats and newsmen based in Hanoi on tours to examine the claimed damage.

DIKES, From A1

President Nixon said last Thursday that "we have orders out not to hit dikes because the result in terms of civilian casualties would be extraordinary." Nevertheless, Hanoi insists the dike complexes are being hit, with new concentration on the dike maintenance equipment, even more than on the dikes themselves.

The rising North Vietnamese criticism, which is receiving increasing world support, is likely to be pursued vigorously when the Paris peace talks on Vietnam resume July 13. The Stockholm Conference on Vietnam on Sunday said it will rally world technicians to aid in reconstructing the dikes allegedly damaged by American bombing.

In a July 1 statement, North Vietnam's Water Conservancy Ministry charged:

"Especially in June, the U.S.

imperialists violently struck 20 times (at) sections of dikes and water conservancy projects that had already been repeatedly hit in April and May. . . .

"More barbarous still, the U.S. imperialists stepped up using CBU bombs and smart bombs to strike the dike-repair sites . . . to prevent the people in the localities from repairing and strengthening dikes to prevent flash floods and other flooding."

An Agence France Presse reporter in Hanoi, Jean Thoraval, reported on June 30 that he was taken to Phu Ly, about 40 miles from Hanoi, to inspect bomb damage to a tributary of the Red River. He reported, "The system of sluice gates no longer worked, for the six doors could not move up or down. The reinforced concrete pillars had been destroyed or cracked. As for the dike itself, apart from the craters which demolished it, it

was full of cracks, some of them 30 centimeters wide."

North Vietnam last year suffered its worst natural floods in modern history. The condemnatory language used against the Nixon administration is now reaching new depths of bitterness. The Army newspaper, Quan Doi Nhan Dan said on June 29:

"In his impasse (in the war), Nixon is repeating the crimes of Hitler by ordering U.S. aircraft to attack dikes in a systematic manner with the intention to cause floods and bring the Vietnamese people to their knees."

Presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger for the first time was the target of a lengthy, critical attack in a Hanoi publication, Thong Nhat, on June 16. Kissinger, who has conducted a series of private talks in Paris with Hanoi Politburo member Le Duc Tho since 1969, presumably would be the U.S. negotiator in future secret talks.

The article about Kissinger was sarcastically entitled, "The Unchanged Characteristic of His Excellency the Adviser." Unmentioned in the article was the probable reason for it: Kissinger's major role in the Moscow and Peking summit visits by President Nixon, where the United States outflanked North Vietnam by improving relations with Hanoi's major allies.

Kissinger was derided as "a German, not an American," with the added attack that "because his family was Jewish, some people said his excellency was not a German but a Jew living in Germany," where he was born. Kissinger's service as an adviser to the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, and to New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller before joining the Nixon administration, was described as a "strange" ability "to serve completely different personalities and contradictory policies. . . ."