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# U.S. Admits 12 Hits on Viet Dikes

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American bombs have hit 12 locations in North Vietnam's dike system, the Nixon administration acknowledged yesterday. It described the damage as "minor," "easily repaired" and insufficient to cause any flooding.

This latest version of the official American assessment of damage to North Vietnam's dikes, which has been

unfolding piecemeal this week, was made public by the State Department. It was in the form of an eight-page summary of what were described as "the facts available to the intelligence community in Washington."

The report, which some officials admittedly had misgivings about publicizing, was issued to support President Nixon's statements at his press conference on Thursday.

The administration's decision to publicize the report, with the full expectation that it will be challenged by North Vietnam, is further evidence that the White House regards as the expanding controversy as a potentially explosive issue. North Vietnam always suffers some flooding in August, the report notes, and the unknown factor is how serious the flooding will be this August and who will be blamed for it.

State Department officials said the report was based on extensive aerial reconnaissance on July 10 and 11. At that time, North Vietnam charged that between April 10 and June 10 U.S. planes had attacked dikes 68 times, dropping 665 bombs along the Red River and other waterways in a "systematic" and "deliberate" attempt to expose that nation to great flood damage in later months.

The report, challenging those claims as "not true," states that:

- "Photographic evidence shows conclusively that there has been no intentional bombing of the dikes. A few dikes have been hit by stray bombs directed at military-associated targets nearby. The damage is minor and no major dike has been breached."

- Aerial reconnaissance showed "12 locations where damage has occurred," with 10 of those locations described as "close to identified individual targets such as petroleum storage facilities" and the other two "adjacent to road and river transport lines." There were multiple bomb hits at the 12 sites, but officials declined to make public the photographs on grounds that this would encourage North Vietnam to release, or "conceive," its own "counter-photographs."

- "Because a large number of North Vietnamese dikes serve as bases for roadways, the maze they create throughout the (Red River) delta makes it almost inevitable that air attacks directed against transportation targets cause scattered damage to dikes."

- "The bomb craters verified by photography can be repaired easily with a minimum of local labor and equipment—a crew of less than 50 men with wheelbarrows and hand tools could repair in a day the largest crater observed. Re-

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pairs to all the dikes could be completed within a week. . . ."

- The State Department said the report shows that all damage observed was southwest of Hanoi and downstream from the exposed capital. In the Hanoi region, the height of dikes reaches 40 feet, with some dikes "80 feet at the flood line and spread to 200 feet at the base." This would be the obvious area for attack, U.S. experts claim, if there were a deliberate plan to knock out dikes and flood the countryside.

The report repeats the U.S. claim that North Vietnam's greatest flood danger is its failure to repair fully the damage done by the 1971 record flood. But there are other extraordinary American pressures on North Vietnam.

Since April, the United States has conducted intensive bombing of the Hanoi-Haiphong region, and on May 8 President Nixon ordered the mining of North Vietnam's harbors. Not only is North Vietnam facing the risk of flood damage and heavy strain on its manpower and equipment resources, but severe floods could mean the loss of the autumn rice crop when the nation is suffering a great curtailment of imported food.

President Nixon, on June 29, initially dismissed as "inaccurate" reports that American planes were hitting North Vietnam's "dikes and dams." Yesterday, in New York, U.S. Ambassador George Bush met for 45 minutes with U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim who was charged by President Nixon on Thursday as having "seized upon this enemy-inspired propaganda" about U.S. attacks on the dikes.

Bush said later, "I hope there will be no deterioration in the relationship between the U.S. and the U.N." as a result of the row with Waldheim, which Bush described as "emotional and fraught with sensitivity." Waldheim declined to comment on President Nixon's criticism.

In Paris yesterday, the North Vietnamese delegation scoffed at President Nixon's denial of any deliberate plan to hit the dikes, saying that in the last three months there have been "135 air raids against the dike system...damaging over 100 portions of dikes and other important hydraulic works."

## **McGovern Says Nixon**

### **Deceived Us on War**

CUSTER, S.D., July 28 (UPI) — Sen. George McGovern charged today that President Nixon was "again deceiving and misleading the American people" by pretending there was a chance for a negotiated settlement of the war.

In a statement released from his Black Hills vacation retreat here, the Democratic presidential nominee said Mr. Nixon's news conference Thursday "was a transparent effort to justify his continued propping up of the corrupt Thieu dictatorship in Saigon, step up use of American bombers and naval forces in Indochina, and the prolonging of the Paris peace talks while U.S. and Vietnamese casualties continued."

In his statement on the war, McGovern charged that Mr. Nixon "stooped beneath the dignity of his office yesterday in bragging that 'we could finish off North Vietnam in an afternoon.'"

McGovern said the news conference showed the "old Nixon at his worst."

"President Nixon's weakness seems to be that he is always the opportunist," McGovern said. "He apparently lacks an abiding moral sense, and that is deeply to be regretted for our entire society."

### **Photo Showed**

#### **1967 Dike Damage**

The picture of North Vietnamese workers repairing the country's dike system that appeared on Page A10 of the Washington Post yesterday was a 1967 photograph showing damage caused by bombing at that time and did not depict damage from current alleged U.S. bombing of dikes. The picture was taken by Amando Doronila of the Manila Times and was distributed by the Associated Press five years ago.