

# Viet Dike Bombing Called Deliberate

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Three Democratic senators today accused the Nixon administration of a "deliberate, if not calculated, policy of bombing the dikes of North Vietnam."

Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania denounced the three as having fallen for "an enemy lie."

Sens. Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, John V. Tunney of California and Fred Harris of Oklahoma noted a State Department report last week that only 12 areas had been hit on the dike system and that each was close to what was described as "a legitimate" military target.

## 'Deliberate'

"Clearly, if the dikes are in close proximity to a potential bombing target, the policy of the administration is to bomb the target anyway, regardless of the consequences for the dikes," Kennedy said.

"It doesn't take a Philadelphia lawyer to label this policy for what it is — a policy of deliberately bombing dikes."

"If the direct result of bombing a target beside a dike is that bombs will inevitably hit the dike," he said, "then the dike is being bombed as deliberately as if the dike itself were the target."

The White House respond-

ed sharply to the senators' charges.

Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler described such statements as "irresponsible comments that overlook what the administration . . . has stated as being U.S. policy." In addition, Ziegler said, such statements "only serve to further the enemy propaganda effort."

## 'Traditional' Flooding

That propaganda effort, Ziegler said, is massive and is intended to place the blame on U.S. bombing for flooding which traditionally occurs in North Vietnam during the rainy season.

He cited the State Department's disclosure last week of 12 accidental hits on dikes and dams and said, in response to a question, that Nixon asked military authorities to check to make sure pilots were following his policy and not bombing the dikes. "He is confident they are not," Ziegler said.

Scott accused his colleagues of being taken in by Communist propaganda.

If the United States wanted to, "it could turn North Vietnam into a lake in less than a week," he said.

## 'No Such Intention'

But there is no such "horrendous" intention, he asserted.

"These dikes are not being bombed," Scott said.

"There is an order by the

President that they shall not be bombed."

And he added: "It's about time we debated the genuine issues and stopped discussing extraneous and inane nonsense . . ."

The three senators are sponsors of a Senate resolution introduced today calling attention to North Vietnam's fragile dike system and warning of the disastrous flooding and potential famine that would be caused if it was breached.

## Supports Nixon

The resolution supports President Nixon in his announcement policy against the bombing of the dikes.

"Clearly, a concentrated effort to attack the dikes would cause devastation and death on a scale perhaps unparalleled in the history of mankind, and it is entirely proper in the resolution that the Senate should express its desire to prevent such an unconscionable tragedy," Kennedy said.

Scott did say that the large force of manpower normally used to man the dike system during the monsoon season apparently has been drained away by North Vietnam's current military efforts.

Without saying so directly, he indicated there may be some flooding later this year but that if it does occur, it will be attributable only to the fact the dikes only to the fact the dikes