

## Step Up in B-52 Raids Around Saigon Is Reported

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Thursday, Oct. 5 (AP) — The United States command has reportedly ordered an increase in the number of B-52 bombing raids in the Saigon region.

The aim, senior officials said yesterday, is to counter suspected Communist plans for a wave of attacks in the weeks just before the United States Presidential election next month.

South Vietnamese field commanders were said to have shifted troops closer to Saigon to defend major installations in the area, including the big bases at Bienhoa and Longbinh, where hundreds of American support troops and airmen are still stationed.

Senior officers said that the chances of an infantry attack on Saigon itself appeared remote but that the capital could come under attack by rockets and demolition squads.

Although considerable enemy action is still being reported in the northern part of South Vietnam, senior United States

commanders say that the Communist forces there are now largely in a defense status and that the emphasis is now on the Third Military Region, which includes Saigon.

### Saigon Area Attacks Up

Small enemy attacks have reportedly increased in recent days in the area around Saigon. These have included the shelling of district capitals and villages and attempts to cut highways, according to official accounts.

For several weeks B-52's have been flying raids as close as 25 miles to Saigon, most of them aimed at destroying supply stockpiles reportedly put in place by enemy forces for later attacks. Officers said yesterday that these strikes had been intensified because of good results from the earlier ones.

Thirty of the huge bombers were reportedly assigned to raids on four sides of the capital in the latest effort.

Meanwhile, United States air operations over North Vietnam were said to have fallen off

sharply as a result of Typhoon Lorna. The United States command reported only 120 fighter-bomber strikes over the North on Tuesday.

In another development, the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Enterprise was reported to have arrived off Vietnam for another tour of duty, replacing the older carrier Hancock. Despite the bad weather that extended well south of the demilitarized zone, officials said, some of the Enterprise's 75 jets flew raids in South Vietnam.

The exchange of ships reportedly left the Seventh Fleet's carrier force at six—where it has stood since President Nixon beefed up the United States air strength in Indochina in the early stages of the Communist offensive six months ago.

In the ground war, 18 South Vietnamese civilians and two militiamen were reported killed and six civilians wounded early yesterday as Vietcong demolition specialists raided two coastal villages near Danang. Eight of the attackers were said to have been slain.

At least 100 civilians were

listed as missing after the attack on the two villages—Xuyenentho and Xuyenphuoc, which together have a population of about 10,000.

Local officials were reportedly trying to determine whether the missing South Vietnamese had been kidnapped or had accompanied the invaders willingly. The Vietcong frequently abducts civilians to work as porters and laborers or even to serve as soldiers.