

# Heavy Toll As Bombing Raids Go On

A.P. & U.P.

Saigon

American war planes again pounded targets today in and around Hanoi and Haiphong, U.S. military sources said, and the American authorities announced the combat loss of another B-52 over North Vietnam.

A U.S. command spokesman said the latest stratofort downed since full-scale bombing above the 20th parallel resumed December 18 was shot down Wednesday near Hanoi. Its six or seven man crew was listed as missing.

The command yesterday reported the loss of two B-52s in the air over North Vietnam. One crashed in Thailand early yesterday as a result of hostile fire but its crew parachuted to safety. The other was shot down Tuesday and its crew was listed as missing.

The latest stratofort loss brought to 15 the number of B-52s the command has reported shot down since December 18.

## HANOI

Hanoi radio said in a broadcast today that it has shot down 33 B-52s since December 18 although its day-to-day totals as monitored in Saigon added up to only 28 B-52s. But it has listed in its daily reports eight planes described only as "jets" and one described only as "U.S. plane."

The North Vietnamese foreign minister yesterday issued a statement saying: "The carpet bombing by B-52s has killed and wounded very many civilians, mostly old persons, women and children. It has destroyed several economic and cultural structures, many houses and properties of the Vietnamese people."

The U.S. command has refused to comment on civilian losses, stating that only military installations are being targeted. Many military targets are near civilian establishments and U.S. officials have acknowledged the possibility of error.

The pro-Communist Hinh Denpa News Agency of Japan said in a dispatch from

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Hanoi that North Vietnamese newspapers reported MIG interceptors shot down a B-52 bomber Wednesday. If true, it would be the first confirmed downing of a B-52 by a MIG.

A spokesman for the U.S. command said last night he could not confirm the report that the B-52 lost Wednesday was shot down by a MIG. It is believed that most if not all of the B-52s acknowledged downed have been hit by anti-aircraft missiles. More than 600 missiles were fired at U.S. aircraft during the first week of the raids.

U.S. military sources have reported at least one and perhaps two MIGs shot down by tail gunners aboard B-52 bombers. This indicates that MIG interceptors are rising to challenge the B-52 bombers, although the U.S. command has reported only one MIG-21 shot down and that by a fighter escort.

In Moscow, the Novosti press agency said its offices in Hanoi were destroyed

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Wednesday by U.S. bombs. The Novosti headquarters in Moscow said it had no information on whether anyone was killed or wounded.

The Novosti offices are in a two-story building in central Hanoi.

A statement by Novosti denounced what it termed the barbarous bombardments by the United States.

After a week of silence, the U.S. command released a bomb damage report Wednesday with more than a dozen different types of military targets. Nearly all the bombing was clustered in the Hanoi-Haiphong area.

A big CH-53 helicopter crashed in Laos but the command said its five crewmen were rescued, one of them wounded. The helicopter was hit over North Vietnam during a rescue mission Wednesday but made it across the border before going down.