

# KISSINGER DENIES WHITE HOUSE ROLE IN FALSE RAID DATA

He Says It Neither Ordered  
nor Knew About System  
In Cambodia Reporting

INVESTIGATION STARTED

Nixon's Adviser Describes  
the Official Mishandling of  
Record as "Deplorable"

By SEYMOUR HERSH  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 19—Henry A. Kissinger declared today that the White House "neither ordered nor was it aware of any falsification of records" on the secret bombing of Cambodia ordered by President Nixon in March, 1969.

The President's adviser on national security, in a brief telephone interview, also said that the White House had begun an investigation into the falsification. Asked his opinion about the official mishandling of records, Mr. Kissinger said, "I think it's deplorable."

The Defense Department conceded this week that B-52's were bombing Cambodia for 14 months before May, 1970, although the United States was officially professing a policy of respecting that nation's neutrality.

### Criticism of Secrecy

The bombing has been heavily criticized this week by some members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, in part because of the secrecy surrounding it, but more significantly because of the admission that falsified reports were involved in providing that secrecy. In the military's own internal reporting system, the raids were listed as having taken place in South Vietnam.

Mr. Kissinger's comments came hours after Jerry W. Friedheim, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, told reporters that the Strategic Air Command, which controls all B-52 flights, might have been responsible

for ordering the falsification. However, the Pentagon later issued a clarification in Mr. Friedheim's name saying that the falsified reporting procedures involved in the secret bombing "were authorized and directed from Washington, not from S.A.C." The statement added: "We will be responding to the Senate Armed Services Committee's questions on this matter and we will not comment further pending that response."

The Pentagon spokesman also identified William P. Clements Jr., the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and Adm.

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Thomas H. Moorer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as the officials who were "ultimately" responsible for the Defense Department's decision earlier this year to withhold information on the Cambodian bombing from statistics supplied to the armed services committee.

Senator Harold E. Hughes, the Iowa Democrat who initiated the recent disclosures, subsequently declared that he would urge the resignation of any official "who was responsible for making the decision to order false information to be presented to appropriate members of Congress."

"I think we need to be tough," Mr. Hughes said in calling for immediate hearings. "This represents the very basis of democracy and control of the military itself. It's now obvious that we've been lied to officially."

Mr. Friedheim continued to defend the falsification during today's 70-minute press briefing. He thus put the Defense Department on record in favor of tactics that have been deplored by most of the senior officials of the Nixon Administration who were responsible for originating the 1969 bombing program.

Yesterday, The New York Times quoted both the former Secretary of Defense, Melvin R. Laird, and the retired former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, as having criticized the falsification and having insisted that they had no knowledge of it.

Asked about those comments today, Mr. Friedheim said, "This is one of those situations where everybody's correct."

He explained that although the directions for secrecy came from the highest officials in the Government, "the exact system was worked out by those in the field." Pressed on this point, Mr. Friedheim said: "The mechanics of it were no doubt worked out in the major com-

mands in Southeast Asia, which would be S.A.C."

Officials at the Strategic Air Command headquarters had no immediate comment. Lieut.

Gen. Alvin Gillem, then the commanding general of the Eighth Air Force in Guam, the S.A.C. unit that supplied the B-52's used in the secret bombing, could not be reached for comment. General Gillem is now the commander at the Air University at Maxwell Air Force base in Montgomery, Ala.

Mr. Friedheim defended the "double entry" bookkeeping system set up by the Strategic Air Command, saying that it was needed to insure that the total number of flights over Indochina were known to the budget planners in the military.

### Major Tells Role

By making sure that the total number of flights were accounted for—even if some flights over Cambodia were listed as being over South Vietnam—the Strategic Air Command was able to keep track of needed bombs, gasoline and other supplies, the spokesman said.

And, by providing a channel for the accurate information to be relayed clandestinely to decision-makers in Washington, he added, the Command enabled the Pentagon "to be able to report the accurate statistics and location of the bombing when security made it possible."

The official release of that information came yesterday, two days after Hal M. Knight, a former Air Force major, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that he falsified some records and burned others while serving with a Strategic Air Command radar unit in South Vietnam in early 1970.

It has not yet been made clear why officers in the Strategic Air Command or elsewhere believed that they had to avoid the classified military channels if they did not want to compromise the secret bombing. Two months after the bombing began, The New York Times published a dispatch about it, but the double-entry system continued to be used. Mr. Friedheim offered no explanation today.

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