

NOV 26 1973

Viet Cong Complain of U.S. Flights

SFChronicle
Saigon

The Viet Cong yesterday accused the U.S. Air Force of making illegal reconnaissance flights over its territory in northernmost Quang Tri Province and the central highlands.

The Viet Cong demanded an end to what it called a "brazen violation" of the Paris cease-fire agreement on Vietnam.

At the same time, it accused the government of President Nguyen Van Thieu of killing "dozens" of civilians in the biggest illegal bombing raids on Communist-held territory since January.

A U.S. embassy spokesman in Saigon admitted the reconnaissance flights over South Vietnam by SR-71 planes but denied they were a violation of the cease-fire agreement.

"The United States is scrupulously not violating the Paris agreement (which bans American military operations in South Vietnam)," the spokesman said. "The SR-71s are unarmed."

On Friday, the Viet Cong said, "dozens were killed and hundreds of homes were destroyed" in 12 hours of raids by South Vietnamese planes against Katum in Tay Ninh province along the Cambodian border.

South Vietnamese military sources said the raids involved 127 single plane sorties and admitted they were the heaviest since the cease-fire signing on January 28. The sources said one F-5 fighter-bomber failed to return.

United Press