

The Terrible Toon-- Hanoi's Red Baron



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SENATORS are still trying to dig out the details of the unauthorized bombing of North Vietnam. The target of one raid, for example, was a lone fighter plane photographed on the ground at Donghoi Airfield.

Its pilot is a modern Red Baron who has managed to break through the electronic protective screen surrounding our B-52 bombers. His name is reported to be Toon and he's a menace behind the controls of a MIG.

He skims over the treetops to avoid radar detection, then shoots straight up full blast. At least once, he zoomed right through the middle of a B-52 formation. But he misfired his missiles and failed to knock down any of the big bombers.

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THE TERRIBLE Toon has also threatened other B-52 bombing missions over both Laos and Vietnam. The Air Force brass were excited, therefore, when his plane was spotted in an aerial photograph of Donghoi Airfield. This is the southernmost MIG base in North Vietnam.

Lieutenant General John Lavelle, then the Air Force commander in Southeast Asia, told Senators that he spoke to his superior, General Creighton Abrams, about the MIG and got the impression Abrams approved of a strike to destroy it.

At that time, White House troubleshooter Henry Kissinger was holding delicate, secret negotiations with North Vietnam's Le Duc Tho in Paris. President Nixon, therefore, had restricted air combat over

North Vietnam. Under the President's orders, the MIG wasn't supposed to be attacked on the ground but could only be engaged if it took off with "hostile intentions."

Donghoi Airfield was attacked anyway in early November 1971. Bad weather obstructed the view and the American pilots had to bomb through the clouds. The bombs missed the MIG. In any event, it's unlikely Toon was sitting in the parked plane.

North Vietnam's notorious Red Baron meanwhile, is still on the loose. But the story of his exploits has been censored by the Pentagon.

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EVERYONE knows the Kennedy family is rich. When Eunice Kennedy Shriver and four of her five children flew back to Washington from the family compound at Hyannis Port, Mass., the other day, however, they were all wedged into the tourist cabin.

The stewardesses and other passengers gave no sign that they recognized the wife and children of the Democratic vice presidential nominee. Mrs. Shriver was typically dissheveled, her hair in her eyes and a pencil protruding from behind one ear. One of her shoes even had a missing toe ornament.

Mrs. Shriver did her best to work on a messy pile of campaign material at the same time she was keeping order between her two youngest sons, Mark and Anthony.