... the President treat-
ing ... close ... of officials, said
the ... advised against it.

After Nixon decided to do
whatever is necessary to re-
pel the North Vietnamese
offensive, he set few limits
on possible action. The offi-
cial said the response could
go beyond bombing Hanoi
and Haiphong, but did not
decline to spell out details.

Planned Response

Nixon began at least three
months ago to plan his re-
sponse to the expected offen-
sive, the official said, and he
met secretly with small
groups of advisers.

Although administration
spokesmen have said the
reason for the use of U.S.
air power is to protect with-
drawing American troops,
seek return of prisoners of
war and prevent a Communist
takeover of South Viet-
nam, the official said Nixon
had a broader purpose.

He said the U.S. position
as military and political
leader of the free world is at
stake.

Nixon was said to believe
that if he ordered bombing
of Hanoi and Haiphong that
the leaders of other govern-
ments, although they might
criticize him in public,
would say in private: "By
God he will stand up."

Nixon has said frequently
that if Democratic presiden-
tial candidates try to make
a major issue of the war,
they will have the rug
pulled out from under
them. The official conced-
ed that the war may now be
a potent issue to use against
Nixon.

WASHINGTON — (UPI)

... of President Nixon's
... advisers counseled
him against bombing Hanoi
and Haiphong because they
feared it could cost him the
November election, a high
administration official says.

Reporters present were
pledged not to reveal the of-
ficial's name, but CBS,
which did not attend the
meeting, said it had learned
from independent sources
that the official is Treasury
Secretary John B. Connally.

The official said Nixon de-
cided to escalate the U.S. re-
sponse to North Vietnam's
Easter Week ground offen-
sive because the President
was convinced he would not
have a "viable foreign poli-
cy" unless he did.

Cook Criticizes

"I don't know what I
should do to change the na-
ture of the country, but it is
questionable whether I could
have a viable foreign policy
unless I ..." was the offi-
cial's actual quote of Nixon.

"We're doing what I think
has to be done," the offi-
cial continued, quoting at
least ... who ... was a
witness. He gave no indica-
tion ... of his
remark ... when it was
mentioned ...

Nixon was described, as
he spoke, as being ... and ...
... ... made
... ...
... ... Con-
nally concluded.

During the two weeks the
advisers advocated the ...