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**Bomb Rise
Set Before
Ban Pledge**

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A secret report prepared by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee says that the escalation of U.S. tactical bombing in Cambodia—which has since levelled off again—was planned and put into effect at least 5 to 10 days before the White House's June 29 pledge against further bombing escalation.

The information in the classified report contradicts charges by some war critics that President Nixon "double-crossed" Congress by deliberately increasing the bombing immediately after the no-escalation pledge was given to Congress as part of a compromise ending all bombing on Aug. 15.

The escalation of U.S. fighter-bomber sorties (but not B-52 raids) in Cambodia was announced by the Pentagon July 2, three days after the White House's no-escalation pledge.

Sen. Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.) the next day accused

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the President of a deliberate "double-cross of the Congress." A number of other war critics reacted the same way privately, and the Foreign Relations Committee ordered a study of sortie rates to determine when the escalation began.

The committee report, circulated to several members yesterday, concludes that the fighter-bomber sortie rate, which had been running about 180 to 200 a day, tailed off to a low point of about 150 daily in the middle of June.

But then it began to escalate again toward the end of the month. It reached a level of a bit over 200 toward the end of the last week of June and then jumped to its highest level—between 250 and 275—on June 30, the day after the no-escalation and Aug. 15 cut-off agreements were concluded between the White House and Congress. The next day, July 1, it dropped again to just over 200 and has remained at about that level the first week of this month.

According to one source, the report makes clear that the escalation plan, to take advantage of better weather and to counter Communist ground activity, was approved by field commanders on June 20, nine days before the no-escalation pledge was given. The actual escalation began on June 24.

The report gives no explanation of why the rate continued rising one more day after June 29, but it hints that poor coordination between Washington and commanders in the field in Indochina may have been the explanation.

The agreement to cease all further Indochina combat activities Aug. 15 unless Congress expressly authorized them to continue was given to Congress by the President, through public statement by House and Senate GOP leaders, on June 29. As part of the agreement, Foreign Relations Committee Chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) read a statement declaring that the White House agreed to refrain from escalating the bombing in the six weeks until Aug. 15. GOP Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.) stated that the White House agreed to this pledge.