

Fulbright Committee Asks Explanation for Air Raids

By TAD SZULC NOV 24 1970
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23—The Senate Foreign Relations Committee unsuccessfully sought today an explanation of the weekend air strikes at North Vietnam.

Senator J. W. Fulbright, the committee's chairman, made an urgent request for the appearance of top State Department officials at closed hearings tomorrow afternoon. No reply had been received at the end of the day.

The committee, none of whose members had so far received any information from the Administration on the reasons for the raids, decided to call hearings as soon as possible to determine the implications of the bombings.

The reactions in the Senate suggested a revival of antiwar sentiment among many Senators, who expressed concern that the United States involvement in Indochina was again deepening.

Mr. Fulbright said to reporters, "It would seem that the actual policy is to escalate the war and to seek a military victory."

Later, told of the attempt to rescue American prisoners of war at a compound near Hanoi, the Arkansas Democrat said that it had the "implications of a much wider war."

"It is certainly a very provocative act to mount a physical invasion," he said. "It may lead to other things, who knows?"

But, on the whole, Senators' comments were more tolerant of the reasons for the rescue operation—Mr. Fulbright conceded that "the idea of rescuing prisoners of war is very appealing"—than of the air attacks on North Vietnam.

Senator Henry M. Jackson, Washington Democrat, said the landing near Hanoi was "fully

Continued on Page 13, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

warranted in the light of the North Vietnamese Government's failure to live up to the terms of the Geneva convention on war prisoners.

Although the news of the commando landing, announced in midafternoon by Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, stunned most Senators, the concern over the consequences of the revival of the aerial war in Indochina overshadowed it.

Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee complained that all the information that they had received on the North Vietnamese raid was through the news media. While the Defense Department said earlier that some Congressional leaders had been informed of the raids during the weekend, the Senate Majority Leader, Mike Mansfield of Montana, said he had neither been consulted nor informed.

A spokesman for Representative Thomas E. Morgan, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said that Mr. Morgan, a Pennsylvania Democrat, had received no information of any kind from the Administration.

In a speech on the floor of

the senate, Senator George S. McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota, said that the renewed bombings were "the height of folly."

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee indicated that its prime interest was in the political consequences of the raids, rather than in its military details, and Mr. Fulbright declined a suggestion from the State Department that witnesses from the Defense Department be called to testify.

Interest in Politics

Committee sources said the Senators wished an explanation of how the raids were likely to affect the Paris peace talks and the chances for a settlement of the war.

Senate sources said that the air raids were likely to complicate even further the Administration's efforts to obtain from Congress supplemental appropriations of \$285-million for Cambodia in military and economic aid.

The only official discussion of the raids today came from a State Department press officer, John A. King, who said that the decision had been "co-ordinated" within the Executive Branch, suggesting it had the approval of the National Security Council.

NY TIMES, P. 34 24 NOV 70

French Newsmen Sees Missile Fins Near Hanoi

The following dispatch is by Joel Henri, a correspondent of Agence France-Presse.

HANOI, North Vietnam, Nov. 23—A North Vietnamese Army political commissar today showed this correspondent a furrow in a ricefield at Thuy-phuong, a village five miles from central Hanoi, that he said had been dug by a United States Navy Shrike missile. The rear part of a missile was intact at the site and bore the manufacturer's markings.

The official said the missile had been fired from a point about 13 miles from the village and had struck a house, scattering thousands of steel cubes.

At Taymo, about 6 miles from the city center, there was a similar furrow in a ricefield, and remnants of a missile with tail fins still intact. A third missile appeared to have exploded a short distance away in another ricefield.

A North Vietnamese Army officer said that the Shrike was designed "to kill people" rather than to destroy equipment and buildings.

["Jane's All the World's Aircraft," a standard reference work, describes the strike as an air-to-surface weapon designed for use against radar installations and equipped with "a conventional high-explosive warhead."]

No Casualty Figures Given

North Vietnamese authorities maintained silence, as is customary, on casualty figures related to the American air strikes carried out over the weekend.

But unofficial sources said most of the dead and wounded were in Quangbinh and Hatinh provinces, in the southern region of North Vietnam. These provinces were said to have been hit hard by waves of fighter-bombers, some based in Thailand and others from the two United States Seventh Fleet aircraft carriers operating in the Tonkin Gulf.

According to unconfirmed reports, many bombs fell in uninhabited areas.

Washington statements about a United States reconnaissance plane reportedly shot down over North Vietnam earlier this month were regarded here as a device to prepare world opinion for a wide-ranging United States operation. But even before those statements, the authorities here had been calling on the army and people to remain alert.

Nixon Policies Assailed

For weeks, observers here have been convinced that to support his policy of Vietnamization and win acceptance for his peace plan, President Nixon would employ some kind of maneuver, and they see Saturday's bombing as a prelude to this.

The North Vietnamese describe the United States tactic of striking strong blows that it then terms limited operations as Machiavellian. They say this has the effect of stifling opposition from American public opinion before it has a chance to make itself heard.

The North Vietnamese also say that by evoking the rights of self-defense and protection of American servicemen, Mr. Nixon is trying to establish a new form of international relations by which Washington can damage other countries' independence and sovereignty with immunity.

These arguments were used today by "Commentator," the name used by an official spokesman writing in the party newspaper Nhan Dan. Observers saw the article as a veiled appeal to all countries, including the Soviet Union, to insure that no such form of international relations can be established.