

Recon Flights

New Hanoi Warning to U.S.

Saigon

North Vietnam's defense minister, General Vo Ngu-Giap, warned in a speech broadcast last night that unarmed reconnaissance planes flying over North Vietnam territory would be shot down. He said the United States has no right to make such flights.

Giap, hero of the Communist Viet Minh victory over the French, issued his warning against U.S. reconnaissance flights over North Vietnam in a speech delivered in Hanoi and broadcast over the Viet Cong's liberation radio.

"We have the right to trace closely the movement of any kind of U.S. aircraft and to shoot it down as soon as it violates our air space," Giap said in the speech, monitored in Saigon.

President Nixon contends that the right to make reconnaissance flights over North Vietnam was a precondition for the United States halt to bombing of the north beginning Nov. 1, 1968.

"Any enemy act of violation from the air, the sea or against our land, air and sea spaces will be severely punished by the people and armed forces of North Vietnam," Giap said.

In an apparent reply to Mr. Nixon's warnings that any offensive threats against South Vietnam might provoke U.S. air retaliation, Giap said: "We have the right to concentrate our armed forces at any point of our country in protection of the homeland."

"We have the right to exterminate — and we are firmly determined to annihilate — any enemy who invades our country. This is our sacred right of self defense. We are determined not to let the U.S. violate this sacred right by any adventurous act of war against us."

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