

## Big Increase in Prisoners

# More Bombs, More POWs

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Associated Press

### Saigon

The American effort to compel a Vietnam settlement and free the prisoners of war by the sustained bombing of North Vietnam has resulted in a major increase in the number of POWs.

With the loss of an Air Force F-4 Phantom and its two crewmen in North Vietnam Monday, the United States command listed a total of 100 American airmen missing in the North since the resumption of full-scale bombing more than five months ago, on April 6. That's an average of more than four men a week.

Thirty-seven of the flyers have been reported captured. Many of the others probably were killed.

Prior to the resumption of full-scale bombing, the Pentagon listed 412 Americans missing in North Vietnam during the war and another 388 held in prisoner of war camps in North Vietnam as of April 1.

### LOSSES

The U. S. command says 93 American jets have been downed over the north since April 6, including 19 to MIGs, 29 to surface-to-air missiles and the rest to anti-aircraft artillery fire and other causes.

North Vietnam has broadcast recorded messages from more than 20 pilots captured during the current campaign including some calling for an end to the bombing and the war.

One of the pilots captured during the spring, Air Force Major Edward K. Elias is among three American POWs Hanoi has said it will release soon to representatives of a U. S. anti-war group.

Anti-war statements attributed to Elias and Navy Lieutenant Norris A. Charles, also announced for release, have been among those broadcast during the summer.

### 'PROVED'

One of the statements attributed to Elias said: "We proved in previous years that bombing of North Vietnam would not stop the war in South Vietnam, and now we are filling the detention camps again."

Cora Weiss, cochairman of the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam, to whom the three POWs are to be released says Hanoi authorities have given her the following breakdown of Americans they hold:

Between 1964 and 1968, 368 Americans were captured. Nine were released, 15 died of wounds within a week or so of capture, and five died of diseases in the camps.

Between December 1971 and Aug. 23, 1972, at least 44 more pilots were captured,

bringing the total number of prisoners held by the North Vietnamese to 383.

### TOTALS

She said this total is lower than the Pentagon's because the Defense Department continues to list men as missing or prisoners after the North Vietnamese have reported them dead.

Senior U.S. officials in Saigon feel that the quickest way to get all of the POWs back is to continue the bombing and possibly to intensify it. One senior Air Force official who helps plan operations against North Vietnam said recently:

"My judgment is that the fastest way to get these prisoners back is to compel a settlement, get these guys to

talk, put some give in their position. There's been no give. Just keep pouring it on them.

"Is the bombing in fact delaying the return of the prisoners? I think the answer is no. We stopped the bombing last time — in 1968 — with the expectation of getting some sort of speeded up negotiations and prisoners returned. We got nothing."

### NIXON

President Nixon has said the bombing will continue until North Vietnam agrees to a cease-fire throughout Indochina and the release of all POWs. U.S. officials in Saigon have been hinting that Mr. Nixon plans to intensify the bombing if he is re-elected.

North Vietnam, however,

has given no indication that Mr. Nixon's bombing campaign is bringing it any nearer to capitulation than President Johnson's air war did in 1968.

