

HANOI AREA RAIDS REPORTED CURBED

—OCT 13 1972

U.S. Said to Be Declaring
a Buffer Zone in City
NYTimes

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Oct. 12 (AP) — United States planes attacked North Vietnam again today, but new restrictions were reportedly imposed on raids in the vicinity of Hanoi after the heavy damage there to the French diplomatic mission yesterday.

It was reported that a varying buffer zone was being declared around Hanoi and that all future targets in the area must be cleared first by the Nixon Administration.

The United States Navy said the target of the raid in the Hanoi area yesterday was the Gialam railroad yard and repair shop, three miles northeast of the French mission.

Spokesmen said they believed it was the first attack on the yard since the resumption of full-scale bombing of the North last April 6, and this was taken as an indication that the installation had been on the restricted list of North Vietnamese targets.

[The Chicago Daily News reported that the raid was a result of an order from the Joint Chiefs of Staff two weeks ago, allowing the bombing of previously off-limits targets, and that this order was amended as a result of the wrecking of the French mission. In Washington, the Defense Department declined comment on the reports of new restrictions, saying only that there had been a buffer zone around Hanoi throughout the Vietnam war.]

Stray Missiles Suggested

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird and the United States command here suggested after the raid yesterday that the damage to the French mission might have been caused by stray North Vietnamese surface-to-air missiles that missed the American planes and detonated on hitting earth.

"The whole thing is being looked at very strongly and the Navy is trying to get pilot interviews of results," a United States military spokesman said. He reported that six missiles were fired at the Navy planes, which were from the carrier

Midway. Twenty planes^{*} were said to have participated in the attack.

Initial operational reports from the Navy pilots indicate, United States officials said, that all their bombs were on target, engulfing the Gialam installation with explosions, smoke and fire.

One official of the United States command said that he did not think that the Navy pilots could have been so far off-target as to hit the French mission, three miles away. But the command said it was checking further. Lesser damage was reported to the Algerian and Indian missions.

United States command sources confirmed that the attacks on North Vietnam continued today, but refused to say whether any were in the Hanoi area. The command, which customarily reports on American raids the day after they are flown, is due to list today's targets tomorrow.

The strikes in the Hanoi area yesterday were among a total of 180 over the entire country.

U.S. Declines Comment

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—Defense Department officials declined comment today on reports that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had authorized new bombing targets two weeks ago and that new restrictions had now been placed on strikes in the Hanoi area.

However the officials pointed out that there has been a buffer zone around Hanoi throughout the Vietnam war, and another along the China border, in which raids may be carried out only with specific permission from Washington.

Requests for permission to hit targets in restricted buffer zones normally come from the American command in Saigon, based on the latest intelligence reports. Defense officials said that only a fraction of such requests are granted by Washington.

Nixon Sends Regrets

PARIS, Oct. 12 (AP)—President Nixon has sent a personal message to President Pompidou expressing regret for the damage at the French general delegation headquarters in Hanoi, the Elysée Palace announced today.

India Protests Raid

NEW DELHI, Oct. 12 (AP)—The Indian Government today handed the United States chargé d'affaires, Galen B. Stone, a formal protest over damage caused to the Indian mission in Hanoi during the American bombing raid yesterday.

The Government said that while everyone in the Indian mission escaped unhurt, some window panes were broken, a ceiling in the chancery cracked and the ceiling in the chargé d'affaires office caved in. A Government spokesman said Mr. Stone had expressed regrets and had termed the incident unfortunate.

*North Vietnamese delegation in Paris also gives the figure as 20 planes in attack on Hanoi. All 20 planes off target? (See SFFExaminer 11 Oct, "French HQ in Hanoi Razed by Air Bomb.")