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U.S. Limits

Bombing  
During Talks

A.P. & U.P.

Saigon

The United States has curtailed its bombing of North Vietnam at this crucial stage of the peace talks, informed sources said yesterday.

Informants confirmed that American jets have been making half their usual number of raids over North Vietnam and avoiding targets around Hanoi and Hai-phong on orders from President Nixon.

The U.S. Navy acknowledged, without elaboration, that three of its four carriers have steamed south from the Gulf of Tonkin and are now stationed off the coast of South Vietnam. It marked the first time since April that only one Seventh Fleet carrier has been off the coast of North Vietnam.

Normally three carriers operate against North Viet-

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nam with one in South Vietnamese waters. For the past two days, American tactical fighter-bombers have averaged 130 attacks a day over the North compared to a previous daily average of 250-300 attacks.

Most of the latest missions are flown below the 20th

Parallel in North Vietnam 80 miles south of Hanoi, similar to President Johnson's partial bombing halt of 1968.

Informants conceded that American bombing of North Vietnam is usually affected by monsoon rains at this time of the year, but they said the weather was not severe enough to warrant a 50 per cent curtailment.

The U.S. command reported today, however, that B-52s attacked supply points in the southern half of North Vietnam. More than 20 B-52s took part in the raids, which were concentrated south of the North Vietnamese ports of Vinh and Dong Hoi.

There has been no bombing cutback in South Vietnam. Military sources said B-52s are making saturation raids to break the Communist hold on certain areas before a possible cease-fire.

More than 100 of the eight-jet bombers made 36 raids over enemy-held terrain in the South yesterday, the largest number of raids in South Vietnam for any one day of the war. The previous high was 35 on July 28.

SHELLING

Early today enemy gunners shelled the big Da Nang air base and the provincial capital of Hoi An 15 miles to the south.

Reports from the field said one American civilian and two Vietnamese civilians were killed when 20 Soviet-built rockets hit the Da Nang base and an adjoining village to the west.

Another American civilian, a U.S. soldier and 20 Vietnamese civilians were reported wounded.

The rockets also set fire to a napalm dump and fuel tanks and damaged a taxiway, but the U.S. command said the base was still operational. Three buildings were reported damaged but there were no immediate reports of aircraft losses.

A dozen rockets fell into Hoi An, killing four Vietnamese civilians and wounding 35, field reports said.

PROPAGANDA

The new action coincided with field reports of a stepped-up Viet Cong propaganda effort, countered by an intensified government campaign aimed at showing widespread public support for President Nguyen Van Thieu's opposition to Communist peace proposals.

A document captured in Binh Dinh province ordered Viet Cong cadre to "prepare for a critical period of transition and make your presence highly visible."

It told agents to stockpile Viet Cong flags, loudspeakers and whitewash to obliterate Saigon government flags painted on walls and houses.

Refugees from enemy-held areas in Quang Ngai province confirmed that Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops are forcing civilians to sew flags and donate red, blue and yellow paper for Viet Cong pennants.

The Saigon regime has also ordered thousands of new flags for public distribution, and government officials are organizing rallies in the provinces to condemn Hanoi's proposals for an Indochina settlement.