

3rd Day of B52 Raids On Red Supply Lines

SAIGON —(AP) — American B52s blasted supply targets for a third straight day in their heaviest raids of the war in North Vietnam, the U.S. Command said today.

Meanwhile, a Navy fighter-bomber disabled in a landing mishap became the ninth U.S. aircraft lost in Southeast Asia in the last five days.

The Command said 14 missions by the Air Force Stratofortresses, each with three planes, struck at military supply concentrations near the coastal cities of Vinh and Dong Hoi in the 24 hours ending at noon today.

The big bombers have flown 41 missions in the area below the 20th parallel in the last three days in efforts to knock out supplies being marshaled for shipment into Laos and southward into South Vietnam.

Bad Weather

While bad weather continued to curtail tactical air strikes north of the demilitarized zone, Air Force and Navy fighter-bombers were active in support of government forces in South Vietnam.

A Navy A7 Corsair, attempting a hazardous night landing aboard the carrier USS Saratoga, misjudged the approach and smashed into the deck.

Despite major structural damage, the pilot, Lt. Cmdr. David Edwards, managed to get the crippled jet back into the air. He headed for Da Nang but was forced to abandon the aircraft when his controls failed.

Edwards ejected from the plane and was plucked from the water by a rescue helicopter.

Bis Losses

The last five days have been one of the heaviest periods of aircraft losses in recent months. Other losses include the first B52 ever shot down by Communist fire, three F4 Phantoms and an F111 flying raids over the north, and EC47 cargo plane

that crashed in Thailand and two observation planes lost in South Vietnam yesterday.

Total casualties in the incidents were four killed and three missing. Eleven airmen were rescued.

The B52 was the 127th aircraft lost over North Vietnam since bombing of the north was resumed in April. Total casualties in these losses are now listed as 134 pilots killed or missing.