

Heaviest B-52 Raids Strike at Supply Areas in North

NYTimes DEC 16 1972

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Saturday, Dec. 16—American B-52 bombers stepped up their raids on North Vietnam to a record of 16 missions during the 24-hour period ended at noon yesterday, United States military spokesmen reported.

The greatest number of missions previously flown by B-52's in a single day over North Vietnam was 15, on Nov. 22. A mission normally consists of three of the eight-engine bombers each carrying 24 to 30 tons of bombs. That means that during the period covered by yesterday's report, 48 of the B-52's carrying more than 1,200 tons of bombs attacked the North. The spokesmen said all 16 of the missions were concentrated on supply bases in an irregular pattern around Donghoi in the southern panhandle.

Raids Flown in South

There was no official explanation for the increased number of B-52 raids. One military spokesman suggested, however, that the raids were a response to increased movements of supplies.

In addition to the raids on the North, B-52s flew 14 missions against troop concentrations and staging areas in South Vietnam. Seven were flown against targets around Quangtri city, and three others were flown against North Vietnamese troops 18 miles southwest of Anloc.

The South Vietnamese reported that fighting continued northeast of Anloc and said that the road from Laikhe to Anloc, which was cut by the North Vietnamese in April, has never been reopened. Locninh, a district town overrun by the North Vietnamese in April, remains in their hands, the South Vietnamese said.

In a clash about two miles southeast of Quangtri city, South Vietnamese airborne troops reported killing 44 North Vietnamese soldiers while suffering one of their own men killed and 16 wounded.

Other Clashes Reported

The South Vietnamese said that they killed five enemy soldiers early yesterday near Ducoco southwest of Pleiku, while two of their own men were killed and three wounded. On Thursday afternoon, according to South Vietnamese military

spokesmen, 16 North Vietnamese soldiers were killed in a clash in the same area. The South Vietnamese said they lost one killed and five wounded.

Eighteen enemy soldiers were reported killed and eight South Vietnamese soldiers wounded in a battle yesterday morning about three miles east of the Thanhgioa base camp southwest of Pleiku.

Meanwhile, sabotage and rocket attacks continued in the Saigon area. Twelve rockets were fired at the Bienhoa air base about 15 miles east of Saigon. The South Vietnamese said there were no casualties or damage at the base, but reported that six civilians were killed and two wounded by rockets that struck nearby hamlets. It was the third rocket attack on Bienhoa this month.

According to the South Vietnamese, saboteurs set off explosives at a South Vietnamese ordnance unit parking lot in the Longbinh base near Bienhoa on Thursday morning. A number of vehicles were reported damaged.

An explosive device was set off Thursday night in a South Vietnamese Army parking lot in Saigon, killing one soldier, destroying about 100 gallons of diesel fuel and damaging three trucks, the South Vietnamese said.

In Giadinh, a Saigon suburb,



The New York Times/Dec. 16, 1972

The Donghoi area (1) was heavily bombed by B-52's. In ground war, fighting was reported near Quangtri (2) and Ducoco (3). Laotians captured a tank near Muong Phalane (4).

enemy gunners were reported to have fired 13 rounds of 82-mm. mortars into a shell and Caltex fuel depot, causing slight damage.

The incidents followed the

explosion of an ammunition dump about six miles east of Saigon by sabotage troops. The chain of blasts lasted some 10 hours, shattering windows and shaking buildings in downtown Saigon.

Soviet Tank Reported Taken

VIENTIANE, Laos, Dec. 15 (UPI) — Irregular troops sponsored by the Central Intelligence Agency captured a Soviet-made T-34 tank east of the Laotian panhandle town of Muong Phalane, United States officials said today.

The tank, in good running condition, was reported captured yesterday along with supply caches in the area west of the Ho Chi Minh Trail and about 200 miles east of Vientiane.

Muong Phalane, in North Vietnamese hands for more than a year, was captured by the irregulars earlier this week.

Fighting Near Phnompenh

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Dec. 15 (Agence France-Presse) — Enemy troops kept up their pressure on the Phnompenh region last night, attacking two Cambodian Army positions 12 miles southwest of the capital, the military command said today. Fighting continued north west of the city, the command said.

REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST!