

# Hanoi Claims Raids Heavy Despite Halt

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SAIGON, Dec. 25—There were indications Monday that the United States had extended its unofficial 24-hour Christmas bombing halt over North Vietnam, but the North Vietnamese said there had been massive attacks on Hanoi Christmas eve and Christmas day.

Neither the Florida White House in Key Biscayne nor the U. S. command in Saigon would comment on the North Vietnamese bombing reports.

There was also no White House or command confirmation that a holiday bombing halt was in effect, although the Associated Press Monday quoted a senior U.S. official in Saigon as saying that "the bombing halt has gone more than 24 hours now . . . there is no indication when it (the bombing) will start again."

The Defense Department in Washington said it had no comment on the reports, but a spokesman said the U.S. command in Saigon might have a statement early Tuesday.

The United States has put tight restrictions on information concerning air operations in Vietnam since bombing raids above the 20th parallel were resumed Dec. 18.

Radio Hanoi said Monday that American planes had bombed the capital Christmas eve while church services were being held. There was no mention of the extent of casualties or damage.

In Paris, members of the North Vietnamese negotiating delegation charged that U.S. warplanes bombed the Hanoi-Haiphong area through Christmas morning, "making many victims among the civilian population."

The North Vietnamese said the U.S. had dropped the explosive equivalent of two Hiroshima-type atomic bombs on the Hanoi-Haiphong area the week before Christmas.

Tass, the official Soviet news agency, also reported that there was bombing in Hanoi Christmas Eve beginning at 7:30 p.m. local time.

The U.S. command said 57 American fliers were missing over the North since the raids

were resumed last Monday. A spokesman said 17 planes had been shot down, including 11 B-52 bombers.

The command reported also that U.S. strength in Vietnam dropped to 24,000 during the week which ended last Thursday. It was the lowest number of U.S. troops in Vietnam since Jan. 31, 1965, when the

See INDOCHINA, A7, Col. 1

## INDOCHINA, From A1

massive American buildup was just beginning.

In the ground war, both the Saigon command and the Vietcong exchanged charges of violations during a 24-hour Christmas truce. Saigon Radio reported Monday that 58 violations with a total of 40 government troops and five civilians killed.

The Vietcong radio charged that in the same period South Vietnamese forces "launched 25 sweeps and conducted 40 air strikes."

The Saigon command said it resumed combat operations at dusk Monday when the government-proclaimed holiday cease-fire came to an end.

Elsewhere in Indochina, the Cambodian high command re-

ported Monday that government troops were engaged in fighting near Kompong Thom as Communist forces tightened their pressure on that northern provincial capital.

The commander of the Cambodian garrison said at least 17 of his men had been killed and another 265 were missing.

A Cambodian military spokesman said American fighter jets had inflicted "heavy losses" on advancing Communist forces with a daily bombardment of suspected enemy positions.