

NYTimes

# 'We Must Tell the President'

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WASHINGTON—Can we scientists meet in Washington and ignore the fact that our national Administration is launching from this city the most massive air attacks in history? It is launching those attacks against concentrated centers of civilian population, while blandly announcing lists of military targets that under these circumstances insult the intelligence of every thinking person. North Vietnam hardly contains military targets; and a B-52 bombing pattern one and one-half miles long by one-half mile broad, dropped from an altitude of 30,000

feet, cannot pick out targets. Yet such bombings are now crisscrossing some of the most densely populated cities in the world, in an unprecedented orgy of killing and destruction that horrifies people everywhere—as Guernica, Coventry and Dresden once horrified them. And all in our name.

As scientists we bear a special responsibility. Explain as we will—that science is not technology; that most of us do not make proximity fuses, B-52 bomb sights and all the sophisticated super-weaponry of electronic battlefields—we have also too often claimed that our science is the ultimate source of all such advance technology. Indeed in World War II, which we could regard with some justice as a war of defense, we were ready to help design the prototypes of much of the technological arsenal being used now against one of the smallest and poorest of nations—a nation that offers so little in the way of military targets. This arsenal is now destroying nature itself in Indochina, the land, the trees, the stock animals, depriving a poor people of their homes, fields, means of livelihood and very lives.

Can we meet to talk of nature as our Government is destroying nature? As though that were not going on, directed from this very place?

Just a year ago, as we met in Philadelphia—the city of brotherly love—our President ordered the resumption of mass bombing of North Vietnam, which had been halted in

1968. Beginning the Sunday morning after Christmas, Dec. 26, and continuing until Dec. 31—as we met—1,000 bombing sorties were flown over North Vietnam. We know now that bombing has continued ever since; and now as we meet again in another Christmas season, it is being enormously intensified.

Is our science to serve life, or death? This planet that is in our care—this environment that concerns us so seriously—can we talk of ways to foster and preserve it here while wantonly destroying it there?

We must speak out, as Americans, as scientists, against this outrageous misuse of the fruits of science for death and destruction.

We must tell the President where we stand. Let us insist on an immediate end to the bombing. Let us insist that the cease-fire we were told he was virtually ready to sign last Oct. 26 be signed now.

*This statement was prepared for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and signed by these members: Dr. George Wald, Nobel Laureate, Harvard University; Dr. Salvador Luria, Nobel Laureate, M.I.T.; Dr. Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Nobel Laureate, Marine Biology Laboratory, Wood's Hole; Dr. Everett Mendelsohn, vice president A.A.A.S.; Dr. John Edsalle, Professor of Biochemistry, Harvard; Dr. E. W. Pfeiffer, Professor of Zoology, University of Montana; Dr. Arthur Galston, Professor of Biology, Yale University; Dr. Arthur Westing, Director of the Herbicide Assessment Commission, A.A.A.S.; Dr. Richard Lewontin, Professor of Biology, University of Chicago.*



Sculpture by Stanley Glaubach