

Saigon Aide Says the Bombing Will Force Hanoi to Negotiate

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Dec. 29—South Vietnam's Foreign Minister, Tran Van Lam, said tonight that he believed the United States bombing of North Vietnam would force Hanoi's leaders to "accept serious negotiations."

Appearing on the Government's weekly television program "The People Want to Know," Mr. Lam gave no indication of how long the bombing might continue.

A number of diplomats here have suggested that the bombing, which began nearly two weeks ago, might only serve to further stiffen the resistance of the North Vietnamese. The leaders of North Vietnam have said that they would not resume negotiations with the United States while the bombing was under way.

President Nixon halted the bombing at Christmas and was believed to have been urging the North Vietnamese to resume the talks. But after 36 hours the air raids began anew at the previous level of high intensity, with hundreds of B-52's and fighter-bombers concentrating their might in the densely populated Red River delta.

Hanoi Called 'Stubborn'

When the chances of peace had looked promising in late October, President Nixon curtailed the bombing of the North to below the 20th Parallel. Mr. Lam said the President had lifted the restrictions on the bombers and started them on the heaviest air assault of the war "because of the stubbornness of the North Vietnamese leadership."

Another reason for the heavy bombing, Mr. Lam said, was to disrupt North Vietnamese preparations for another big offensive in the South. This is the official explanation given by the Americans for the bombing. However, no intelligence officials here have been able to provide any strong evidence that the North Vietnamese were planning such an offensive.

Mr. Lam said that President Nixon had also ordered the

bombing to show that the Americans were serious about bringing the Vietnam war to a conclusion and would not tolerate foot-dragging by the leaders of Hanoi.

Mr. Lam said it had been North Vietnam and not South Vietnam or the Americans who had caused the negotiations to break down at a moment when it had appeared that a settlement was imminent.

Diplomats and some American officials here have said that the talks foundered because in the final days the United States insisted upon sharply defining some elements of the original draft agreement that the North Vietnamese wished to have left vague.

Attempt at Split Seen

Continuing his argument that the North Vietnamese were to blame, he said their reasons for causing the breakdown had been at least twofold. First, he said the North sought to develop a split between the Americans and the South Vietnamese. Second, he continued, they hoped to prolong the conflict until the United States Congress convened in early January, anticipating that the weariness of the lawmakers with the war might lead them to cut off economic and military aid to South Vietnam.

Mr. Lam said he was certain that the North Vietnamese had never expected full-scale resumption of the bombing by President Nixon.

In an unusually conciliatory remark for a South Vietnamese leader, Mr. Lam, who spoke in Vietnamese, said that once peace came to South Vietnam he believed the nation could "co-exist with all countries, including Communist countries." An unofficial translation was used for this dispatch.

"As for North Vietnam," Mr. Lam said, "we would reconsider our stance after peace comes and if they give up their plots to seize South Vietnam by force and if they respect the people's wish to choose their ideology then we could also co-exist with them."