

# NYTimes Guam: Holiday Island With a Close-up View of War

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AGANA, Guam, Dec. 29.—If ever there was an island with a split personality, Guam is it. The southern three-quarters of the 212-square-mile island blazes in the tropical sun. The northern quarter, at Andersen Air Base here, is frenzied and tense during the current heavy bombing of North Vietnam.

At the resort hotels along the western coast, New Year tourists, many from Japan, loll on the beaches, cavort in the swimming pools, sip drinks in air-conditioned lounges, and dance the go-go after rich dinners in the evenings.

But they are often jarred out of their relaxation by the B-52's, which fly directly over the resorts on returning from a bombing raid. The visitor here quickly learns that the bombers have been flying in threes. When he hears the first, he looks up to watch for the second and third, like a World War II airfield commander counting his planes as they came home.

"Everybody here does it," said a resident. "It doesn't make any difference whether you're for the war or against it. You know those men up there have just been shot at, and you're glad to see them come home."

"What freaks you out," said a young woman, "is when you see four planes. It blows your mind after seeing three all of the time."

have taken the highest per capita rate of casualties of any place in America during the Vietnam war.

But a small group of antiwar activists from the States has been harassing the flatbed trucks that haul the bombs from the Navy piers on the southwest coast through the town of Agaña north to the ammunition dump at Andersen.

They drive their cars at a snail's pace in front of the bomb trucks and thus slow delivery. A young Navy petty officer in civilian clothes was arrested this week for that. Before being handcuffed and taken away by the shore patrol, he was asked whether he belonged to an antiwar group. "No," he said, "I just don't like bombs."

At the air base here, life is a blur of noise and motion. The roar of the B-52's warming up, taxiing, and taking off, or the whine of the planes coming in, is constant. Ground crews work a 12-hour day, seven days a week, maintaining engines, patching battle damage, pumping fuel and loading bombs.

Lieut. Gen. Gerald W. Johnson, who commands the Eighth Air Force here and in Thailand, rarely leaves the base and has declined numerous invitations to involve himself in civic affairs on the is-

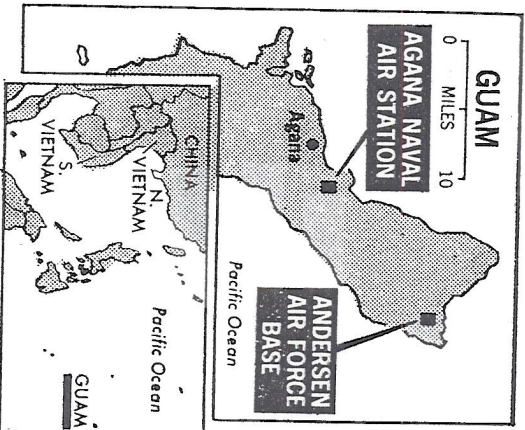
land, businessmen here said.

Security precautions reflect the tension here. Public information officers, on orders from Washington, are permitted to give out only the most cursory and general information. They will not say how many planes have taken off even though a Soviet trawler cruising off the end of the runway counts them and radios Hanoi and any tourist on the beach can count them coming back.

The information officers have been forbidden to arrange interviews for newsmen with flight crews or ground crews or even with General Johnson. But this island is not an aircraft carrier and the crews sometimes go off the base. They also have many friends here with whom they talk and let off steam.

A local reporter, while working on an article about assistance to families of men who are shot down, asked what the chaplains did and how many there were. She was told that the number of chaplains is a military secret.

A resident, trying to find an Air Force friend, asked for his phone number and was told it was classified. She called the base post office to ask for his mailing address and was told it, too, was classified.



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There's not much antiwar activity, and the Guamanians are considered "super-patriots" by the statesiders here. They