

U.S. Raid Strategy Reported

SAIGON, Dec. 29 (AP)—South Vietnamese sources said Friday that President Nixon's bombing strategy is to quickly destroy North Vietnam's ability to support forces in the South, then halt the air attacks and attempt to get peace negotiations under way again.

The sources, members of President Thieu's palace staff, said U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, met with Thieu for two hours Thursday to outline the Nixon strategy.

The sources said Thieu was told that the Nixon administration believes the U.S. Air Force could destroy North Vietnam's "industrial heartland" in the Haiphong-Hanoi area rapidly if attacks are continued at the present intensity.

U.S. officials acknowledged that the air attacks that have been mounted since Dec. 18 are the heaviest sustained blows of the war, aimed at crippling the daily life of Hanoi and Haiphong.

The ultimate purpose of the bombing is to punish Hanoi enough so that it will sign a peace agreement, the U.S. sources said. Much of the one million population of Hanoi already has been evacuated, according to reports reaching Saigon.

U.S. losses have mounted to 27 planes acknowledged downed and 93 airmen killed, captured or missing. One of the losses was the 15th B-52 shot down since the launching of the aerial offensive.

The U.S. command in Saigon declined to say if and when there would be a cessation in bombing, but military sources in Washington indicated that a bombing halt over North Vietnam, similar to an officially unannounced 36-hour

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halt during the Christmas holidays, would be in effect over the New Year.

South Vietnamese officials disclosed that the Saigon government would declare a brief cease-fire for the New Year on Monday. The Vietcong has announced a 24-hour cease-fire effective at 1 p.m. Saigon time Sunday.

The escalated U.S. bombing attacks on North Vietnam have stirred harsh and widespread criticism both in the United States and abroad.

South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam indicated in a television interview Friday night that the bombing is taking a heavy toll in North Vietnam, declaring: "Human endurance has limits. The North Vietnamese should think much about this."

"I think the bombing has much meaning. It is an opportunity for the North Vietnamese people to rebel. North Vietnam does not like the U.S. strength and determination. Bombing forces North Vietnam to negotiate seriously," he said.

North Vietnam has showed no signs of giving in to the massive American air attacks although Hanoi reports thousands of civilians have been killed or wounded and thousands of homes destroyed.

North Vietnam has said it will not resume the peace talks until Mr. Nixon halts the bombing above the 20th Parallel.

Lam said Hanoi expects to gain an advantage from discontent in the new U.S. Congress that convenes next month.

The main stumbling block in reaching an agreement, according to U.S. and South Vietnamese officials, is Hanoi's refusal to agree in principle to Vietnam as two separate states. Such a concession by Hanoi would eliminate any legitimate right to intervention in the South after a cease-fire.

The official North Vietnamese Communist party newspaper Nhan Dan said American air power is attempting to force the North "to accept their absurd terms" for a peace agreement.

"We have good will," added Nhan Dan. "We want peace, but only peace in independ-

ence and freedom. Brutality represents weakness, and it will not intimidate us. Bombs and shells will not subdue us."

Hanoi's official Vietnam News Agency claimed that American B-52 heavy bombers "carpet bombed" a congested area of Hanoi.

"In the heaps of rubble, hundreds of residents, among them a very great number of aged people, women and children lay dead or agonizing," the agency said.

The U.S. command has refused to comment on civilian casualties, saying that only military installations are being targeted. But other U.S. officials have said many of these installations are in built-up areas of Hanoi and Haiphong, and there are bound to be civilian casualties.

American air losses continued to soar. The U.S. command reported Friday the downing of its 15th B52 bomber and three other smaller jets between Tuesday and Thursday. All 12 crewmen aboard the four planes were reported missing.

North Vietnam claims its forces have downed three times the number of American aircraft acknowledged by the command. Radio Hanoi has identified more than 30 captured crewmen.

N. Viets, Soviets

Confer in Moscow

From News Dispatches

Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin met yesterday for the second time this week with Vo Thuc Dong, the North Vietnamese ambassador to Moscow.

In another top-level meeting at the Kremlin, Mikhail Suslov, the Communist party ideologist generally ranked fourth in the Politburo, and Dmitri Ustinov, the Soviet official with overall responsibility for arms production, conferred with senior North Vietnamese Politburo member Truong Chinh.

In an account of the meeting with Chinh, the Soviet news agency Tass reported that the Soviet Union pledged all-out aid to Vietnam, condemned what it termed the barbaric American bombing of the North, and called on the United States to sign an early peace agreement.

Suslov and Ustinov emphasized to Chinh, Tass said, that the Soviet Union would give the Vietnamese people "all necessary help until the victory of its just cause."

In Paris, meanwhile, French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann met yesterday for 45 minutes with William J. Porter, the head of the U.S. delegation to the Paris peace talks.

The Paris peace talks were broken off last week at the insistence of the North Vietnamese. North Vietnam had wanted to meet on Thursday this week, but the United States refused.

A North Vietnamese representative in Paris said yesterday however that the Communists were willing to return to the public talks on next Thursday.