

Laird On B-52 'Success'

Honolulu

The success of B-52 bombers in penetrating air defenses around Hanoi and Haiphong is greater than had been expected, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird said here yesterday.

Laird said because air defenses around Hanoi and Haiphong are "very sophisticated," a penetration by 95 to 98 per cent of the bombers had been expected.

But, he said, the actual penetration rate "has been remarkable."

When asked if the bombings could be sustained and justified by their high costs, Laird said: "We believe that to achieve a generation of peace, certain risks must be taken."

He refused comment, however, on most other questions concerning the present Vietnam situation.

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