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**U.S. RAIDS GO ON
IN SOUTHERN AREA
OF NORTH VIETNAM**

**American Strikes Believed
Halted in South Vietnam
in New Year Truce**

REPORTS STILL MEAGER

**Aides Tell Little of Missions
—Saigon Says Fronts
Are Mostly Silent**

By FOX BUTTERFIELD

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Monday, Jan. 1—American planes continued their raids yesterday below the 20th Parallel in North Vietnam, where the halt in the bombing announced Saturday does not apply, the United States command reported.

An American military spokesman refused to say whether United States planes halted their raids in South Vietnam last night when a 24-hour New Year's Day cease-fire proclaimed by the Saigon Government went into effect at 6 P.M. (5 A.M. Sunday, New York time) a similar cease-fire de-

clared by the Communists began five hours earlier.

It was widely believed in Saigon that American planes had temporarily stopped their attacks in the South for New Year's as they have in past years. All one American official would say was: "We want to keep our options open as much as possible and see what the other side does."

Strikes Flown Earlier

In the 24 hours ending at 8 yesterday morning (7 P.M. Saturday, New York time) United States fighter-bombers flew 211 strikes over the South, a sharp increase from the previous day and the highest number since the intensive bombing of the Hanoi and Haiphong region began on Dec. 18.

As was true during that bombing campaign, the heaviest of the Indochina war, the United States command again refused to disclose how many B-52 missions were flown and what targets they hit either in

the North Vietnamese panhandle or South Vietnam. But a listener in Saigon early yesterday could hear the characteristic distant explosions—like a muffled kettledrum—of several B-52 strikes.

There were no reports of significant ground fighting on the eve of the New Year's cease-fire, the South Vietnamese command said, and there were only 40 incidents reported to have been initiated by the Communists, almost all small-scale shelling attacks. Even the bitterly contested Quang Tri front, score of repeated sharp clashes in the past few weeks, fell silent.

Saigon officials had no apparent reaction to the announcement of President Nixon's decision to stop the 12-day-old bombing above the 20th Parallel. The Saigon Government is often slow to react to

Continued on Page 3, Column 4

U.S. Continues Bombings in North's Panhandle

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8
major developments.

President Nguyen Van Thieu was reportedly informed of Mr. Nixon's decision Saturday in a meeting with Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, who as a result had to postpone a scheduled visit with his wife, Carol Laise, the American Ambassador in Nepal. Mr. Bunker, however, left yesterday morning in an Air Force plane for a four-day vacation.

For the second day the United States command did not

announce any further losses of American planes over North Vietnam, after earlier announcing a total of 15 B-52 bombers and 10 smaller fighter-bombers shot down in the intensive air strikes against the North.

Total Not Official

The unofficial toll of Americans missing in the bombing campaign from Dec. 18 to Dec. 30 stood at 82, with 31 air crew members reported captured and parade for newsmen in Hanoi.

There is no official total of

the number of men missing or since the American command, captured so far in the raids, reversing its long-standing practice, stopped providing information on how many men had been shot down in the B-52s.

The Hanoi radio said yesterday that its forces had shot down one more B-52 in a raid over Hanoi a few hours before the half in the bombing began. That made a total of 81 planes, 34 of them B-52's, that Hanoi has claimed to have downed.