

A B-52 EXPLODING FROM DIRECT HIT BY SAM MISSILE; HANOI'S BACH MAI HOSPITAL DEMOLISHED BY B-52 STRIKES

JAN 6 1973

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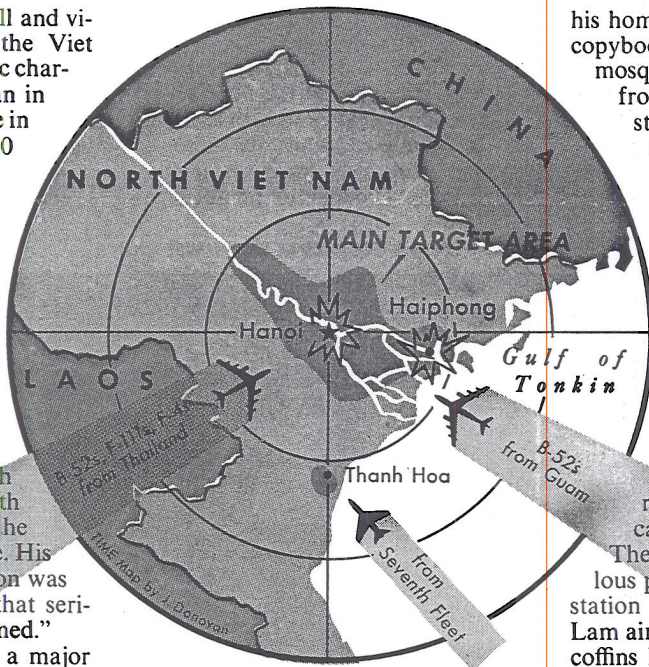
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THE WAR/COVER STORY

Nixon's Blitz Leads Back to the Table

IN its swift swings between lull and violence, hope and despair, the Viet Nam War has often had a manic character to it. Never more so than in the latest extraordinary episode in which, within the space of 40 days, the world moved from a sense of peace at last at hand, to the most brutal U.S. bombing of the war, to Washington's declaration late last week that the secret Paris peace talks would begin again on Jan. 8. Through Deputy Press Secretary Gerald Warren, President Nixon announced that he was halting the massive aerial punishment of North Viet Nam as suddenly—and with as little public explanation—as he had started it two weeks before. His spokesman said only that Nixon was acting because "it was clear that serious negotiations could be resumed."

Rarely if ever before had a major power so openly used overwhelming force to extract concessions at the conference table, or moved so swiftly from diplomacy to war and back; the episode almost evoked the end of the Thirty Years' War, when fighting and negotiating accompanied each other in a dizzying blur. The news of the bombing halt was as puzzling as it was welcome. Nixon had broken off the peace talks in anger at what he regarded as Hanoi's intransigence. He had sent the bombers north on a scale greater than any in the long war to force the North Vietnamese to bargain on his terms, and apparently it had worked—else why resume talking? Yet it was difficult to imagine Hanoi so obviously knuckling under to the U.S. spasm of bombardment, and a North Vietnamese spokes-



man in Paris put a different face on the event, saying: "Our position has always been that if the U.S. wished to solve the problem through serious negotiations, it should cease the acts of escalation and renounce the threat of force."

Those acts of escalation, embodied in daily waves of U.S. bombers aimed at Hanoi's heartland over a period of two weeks, had left the capital of North Viet Nam a stricken city, rapidly emptying of people, without electricity and in some places water, many of its streets and even whole quarters smashed and cratered by the ferocity of daily U.S. bombing raids. Once neat one-story houses lay flattened or lurching at odd angles, roofless and windowless. On one street, a young worker in a red helmet stared numbly into a pit that was once

his home. In it lay children's shattered copybooks, a dead black hen, and a mosquito net still hanging on one end from an upright beam. On another street, relief crews tugged at the corpse of a dead nurse, buried under her blasted dispensary. An old man stood amid the ruins of his home, mechanically putting on his coat and taking it off as though the simple ritual might restore his past.

Children searched among the debris looking for parents, parents for children. At the Bach Mai hospital, patients were trundled piggyback from the smoldering rubble as the director ran frantically from one victim to another. The Bach Thai hospital for tuberculous patients was razed. The railroad station had been destroyed, the Gia Lam airport runways pocked. Stacks of coffins lay at street corners. Here and there on a wall, someone scrawled, "Nixon, you will pay this blood debt," and "We will avenge our compatriots massacred by the Americans."

This montage, assembled from fragmentary reports sent out by foreign diplomats, correspondents and visitors in the two weeks since the bombing began, offered only narrow glimpses of North Viet Nam's agony. So far, Hanoi officials have released no estimate of overall casualties, but there were reports from some areas. In the colorful Kham Thien shopping district of Hanoi, once the home of 5,158 families but partially evacuated before it was struck, city officials have already counted 215 dead and 257 wounded—with many more missing or still buried in the rubble. French observers in North

THE NATION

Viet Nam claimed that close to 1,000 civilians are dead or wounded in the suburban town of Thai Nguyen.

U.S. officials presented a quite different picture of the bombing. A communiqué released by the U.S. military authorities in Saigon ticked off in businesslike fashion the targets American planes had been after: airfields, shipyards, railyards, warehouses, power plants, communication towers, truck parks, and SAM and anti-aircraft installations. The report stated that dozens of these targets were destroyed or heavily damaged—the Phuc Yen airfield was bombed, the Hanoi port facility on the Red River hit hard, “all buildings” in the Haiphong petroleum-product storage area were struck, and the Thai Nguyen thermal power plant was virtually wiped out, and on down the target list.

The split images—one of widespread, indiscriminate destruction in residential areas, the other of selective military targets bombed with cross-hair precision—come together only when maps of the military targets are laid over maps of the cities and towns of North Viet Nam. Then it is at once evident that many of those targets lay smack in the middle of the most populous metropolitan and suburban areas in the North. The Hanoi thermal power plant, for instance, was only 1,000 yds. from the very center of the city. A main petroleum storage area was only

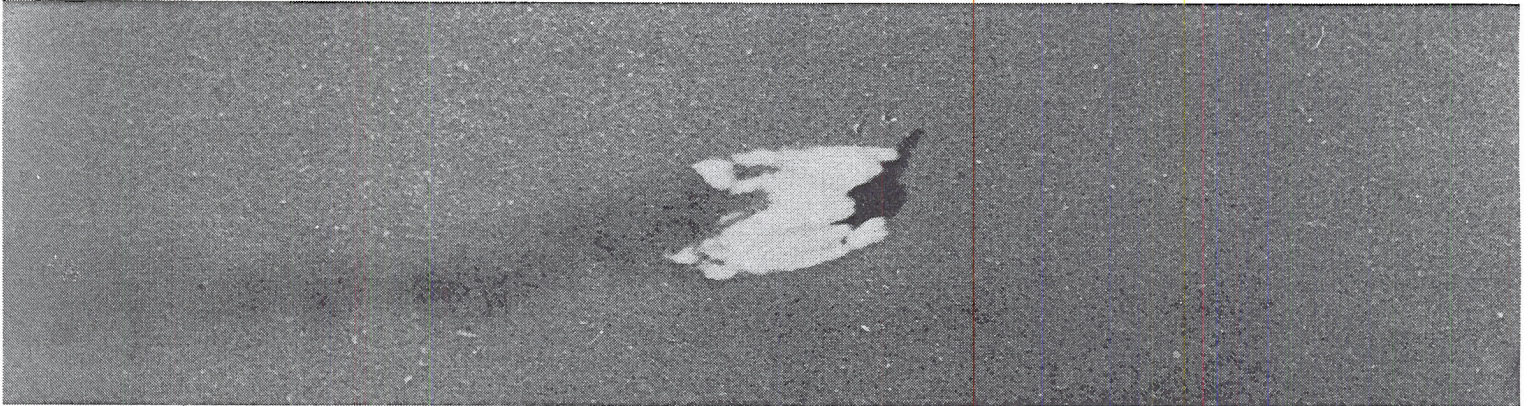
terms of civilian deaths or military targets, the bombing raids of the past two weeks were unprecedented in the history of the Viet Nam War. The usual comparisons with World War II are misleading; the use of fire bombs then caused more casualties and destruction. Still, the sheer tonnage dropped on Viet Nam in the recent raids surpassed virtually all of the famous bombing raids—Dresden, Hamburg, Coventry and London. The U.S. was not trying to do what former SAC Commander Curtis LeMay once suggested—bomb North Viet Nam back into the Stone Age—but to some it almost seemed so. The reaction at home and abroad was swift and almost unanimous (see box, page 14). One of the strongest official protests came from Sweden's premier Olof Palme, who condemned the bombing as a crime against humanity on the moral scale of such Nazi atrocities as the death camp at Treblinka. The equation with the Nazis outraged the Administration, which called in the Swedish ambassador to Washington to protest. Undeterred, Palme himself went to a department store to gather signatures on a nationwide petition to stop the bombing—to be sent to Nixon. On hearing that the bombing had been curtailed, he said: “I'm convinced the world's public opinion had a great deal to do with it.”

For their part, while the bombing was in progress, most Americans seemed simply baffled or numbed; an-

tiwar groups mounted only scattered, sparsely supported protests. It was partly a matter of shock at the sudden turn of events. After two decades of sustaining South Viet Nam intravenously with aid, and after eleven years of substantial military intervention, first with President Kennedy's advisers and later with Lyndon Johnson's half a million troops, the U.S. had seemed in November and until mid-December about to disengage altogether. Then, with stupefying speed, promises of a negotiated settlement turned into a harshly escalated war. The vision of the American prisoners of war in North Viet Nam coming home at last was replaced by the photographs of haggard men newly recruited to the captured ranks, as an average of three B-52s were shot down every two days. Vignettes of the flyers' fates materialized out of North Viet Nam too. One B-52 pilot was inflating his life raft twelve miles downstream from Hanoi in an attempt to escape, when he was surrounded by ferrymen. His last transmission on his survival radio: “Everything O.K. I am surrounded. I surrender.”

Miles from Hanoi, another flyer tried to steer his parachute away from militiamen on the ground. Landing, he pulled out his pistol, but the North Vietnamese disarmed him, yelling, “Hands up! Hands up!” in English. The pilot, in Vietnamese, replied, “*Toi xin hang* [I surrender].” A third pilot only man-

U.S. PHANTOM JET SET ABLAZE BY COMMUNIST DEFENDERS OVER A RICE FIELD IN NORTH VIET NAM



GAMMA

200 yds. from the Bach Mai hospital. The town of Thai Nguyen lay right next to one of the key power plants.

With targets that close to populous or off-limit areas, like hospitals, and with more than 1,400 sorties being flown in the first week alone of the two-week operation by virtually every kind of Air Force and Navy plane in the Indochina arsenal in every kind of weather and through the densest aerial defenses in the world, mistakes were inevitable. Particularly with the massive (100 a day) use of B-52s—each group of three lays its bombs in a row of “boxes” a mile and a half long by half a mile wide—civilian casualties were inescapable regardless of the precision of pilots or particularity of targeting.

Whatever the final tallies show in

CAPTURED U.S. PILOT RICHARD JOHNSON



aged to smear his face with mud before he was captured. All told, the raids added 93 Americans to the list of missing and captured.

Tantrums. To some of his critics at home, Nixon seemed to be acting as much out of petulance as out of any thoughtful diplomatic or military stratagems. James Reston of the *New York Times* called it "war by tantrum." But the Administration, as L.B.J. liked to say, simply hunkered down, keeping its own counsel. At the time of the Cambodian invasion and during the resumption of the bombing last spring, Nixon

P.O.W. B-52 CREWMAN LOUIS LEBLANC



porters accompanying the Bob Hope Christmas show to airbases in Thailand were sternly warned not to ask pilots any questions except about Bob Hope, Christmas and home.

If anything, it seemed to be less business than usual in official Washington. The President was in Key Biscayne, Fla., for most of the week. Henry Kissinger, his own game plan in disarray, went to a Washington Redskins football game, then flew to Palm Springs, Calif., for a New Year's vacation. There, at one point, photographers discovered him strolling with Hollywood Executive Bob Evans. Kissinger's deputy, General Alexander Haig, was "on leave," and outgoing Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird was in Hawaii saying farewell to the Pacific Command. Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler was on a week's vacation in California. Behind this all too casual façade was the Administration's determination that once the decision to bomb had been made, there was little to do but keep the line to Hanoi open, probing and pushing for the signal that ultimately came.

The original decision to bomb was an instructive case history of the President's mind and decision-making apparatus at work. The move came after Nixon and Kissinger concluded that it was the proper course, and Kissinger, acting for Nixon, had consulted with and won the approval of Secretary of State William Rogers, Melvin Laird, CIA Director Richard Helms, Vice President Spiro Agnew and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Because the agreement was complete, the National Security Council was not called into formal session to debate the proposition to unleash the full fury of U.S. air power on Hanoi.

ident's major considerations" in resuming the bombing, according to one aide, "was the conditions the North Vietnamese attached to the release of American prisoners of war. They welshed on the deal."

The North Vietnamese version is that the U.S. welshed on other equally vital parts of the agreement. In October the Americans seemed willing to leave certain points dealing with the political future and the sovereignty of South Viet Nam deliberately vague, to be settled not in fine print but in later political—and possibly military—wringing after the U.S. departure. Later, they claim, Nixon directed Kissinger to spell out the agreement more exactly—in favor of the South. Specifically, the North Vietnamese claimed that the U.S. was not standing by its commitment to withdraw all its troops from South Viet Nam but was instead demanding the right to have civilian advisers on the ground even after the truce. North Vietnamese spokesmen also charged that the International Control Commission envisioned by the U.S.—some 5,000 strong—would be a virtual police force. "This has never been the North Vietnamese nor the Provisional Revolutionary Government's idea of a control commission," said a top-ranking North Vietnamese.

The Administration, on the other hand, claims that the North first stalled on the matter of international controls, then proposed a minuscule force of 250 men so as to ensure its impotence. Fumed one U.S. official: "They knew and they agreed that the international machinery would have to go into effect immediately. But they proposed outrageous protocols, there was no agenda

INTERFOTO MTI—PHOTOREPORTERS



COMMUNIST TROOPS IN QUANG TRACH ON MOVE AFTER HELPING TO DAMAGE U.S. WARSHIPS & AIRCRAFT

had taken his case to the American people over television. This time there was no TV appearance, no explanation or rationale offered. The first news of the attacks came not from the White House but from Radio Hanoi. Nixon imposed a press blackout on all but the skimpiest details of the raids, and ordered everyone from Cabinet officials to bomber pilots to keep silent. Inquiries about civilian casualties were met with the catchism, "We have targeted and continue to target only military targets." Re-

That fury was unleashed because, in Nixon's view, the North had acted in bad faith in the negotiations. In October, the U.S. says, the North agreed to separate the question of American prisoners from the fate of Vietnamese political prisoners being held by the South Vietnamese government of Nguyen Van Thieu. Subsequently, they demanded that the two issues be treated together—no Americans released unless Thieu also opened his jails. This Nixon refused to do. "One of the Pres-

and they refused to compare texts."

The P.O.W. issue proved to be the final blow. Nixon broke off the peace talks, warned the North Vietnamese that the bombing would resume if they did not soften their bargaining stance and, when the North Vietnamese did not respond, launched his blitz. After a week of continuous pounding, the President halted the raids for 36 hours over Christmas, providing a pause in which Hanoi could again respond. It did not, so the raids recommenced, this time

THE NATION

with effect. Hanoi's response was timely for the Administration, since it did not seem feasible that the raids could have continued very much longer, for several reasons, including the exhaustion of targets, the continuing loss of B-52s and airmen, and public opinion both at home and abroad. Also, Congress reconvenes this week, and continued bombing would provide a powerful impetus to cut off funds for the war. Already the President has lost the support of Republican Senator William Saxbe of Ohio, who until last week had backed Nixon by voting against almost all of the antiwar proposals in the Senate. He could no longer have done so, said Saxbe, had the bombing gone on: "It worried me as an American that we were doing something that I just couldn't buy and I think most people felt the same way."

Message. The question remains why the President embarked on so massive a retaliation, one that he surely knew, and therefore must have chosen with some anguish, would cause heavy casualties both for North Viet Nam and U.S. flyers. The first and soon abandoned Administration rationale was that the bombardment was to halt a North Vietnamese offensive. In fact, by all intelligence estimates, none was in preparation. Now the Administration's argument is that a major show of force was required to bring Hanoi around on the terms of a peace.

According to one top Administration source, the President felt that "there was a massive act of deception" on the part of the North Vietnamese. Nixon believed that a reaction was called for, something that would be dramatic enough to drive the North Vietnamese into a more tractable position in the Paris bargaining. Both he and Kissinger ruled out "picking away with a few Phantoms." Looking back over the record of Johnson's bombing policy, Nixon apparently concluded that his predecessor had not been forceful enough. With the Johnson bombing raids, explained one Administration official during the attacks, "the U.S. sent the wrong message. The U.S. unfortunately communicated that this country was afraid to conduct a sustained, hard, coordinated air and naval operation against the enemy. Now we are sending the right message. The new raids are a signal of this country's determination to increase the level of military impact—war—on North Viet Nam."

The bombing did have military objectives to be sure—mainly to bomb the North Vietnamese back to the weaker supply and staging positions they were in when the bombing was stopped in October. The Communists had been extremely active in building up their supplies during the November and early December hiatus. But the main aim was diplomatic. Nixon wanted to get the North Vietnamese talking again in terms he wanted to hear. There was also the possibility that, in preparing to go

ahead with an imprecise settlement, the bombing was a kind of farewell present to Thieu, a last equalizer to set the stage for his going it alone against the Communists. Explained Kissinger before the halt was declared: "The bombing is not an end in itself, and we are trying very hard to put this thing together again."

Ultimately the pragmatic, if not the moral test will be, of course, whether the bombing really helped to put "this thing" together again. Much of that precarious hope—and the controversy about the blitz—rode on the huge wings of the B-52. The planes usually fly in groups of three, bombing in patterns. In the South, the planes lay down those patterns with precision because they can zero in on a grid of numerous American radar beacons. In the North, there are no such guides—and not quite such accuracy. Certainly the B-52 seems a cruel weapon to use against pinpoint targets in crowded metropolitan and suburban areas. The Administration argued, somewhat lamely, that B-52s were needed because they could bomb in the seasonal bad weather. Yet the fact that Nixon chose to use them is proof to some of his critics that he was trying to terrorize the North Vietnamese into new concessions.

Until the current bombing cam-



KISSINGER & EVANS IN PALM SPRINGS

"More Excitement Than We Need"

Guam's Andersen Air Force Base was the chief jumping-off point for U.S. bombers during the days between the sudden U.S. resumption of the bombing and its equally sudden cessation last week. When TIME Correspondent Herman Nickel visited the huge B-52 fleet there last April, the mood was mild and the pilots easygoing. Last week Nickel found a far grimmer spirit—at least until the bombing runs over the North were halted once again. His report:

FOR three full hours a seemingly endless stream of the huge war machines thundered past Charlie Tower, at the end of Andersen's 12,000-ft. runway, to get final takeoff clearance. Then they roared mightily down the gentle decline of the salad-bowl-shaped runway, howled back up the last stretch before finally lifting their 490,000 lbs. off the ground, jet exhausts trailing thick clouds of black smoke.

First off were more than 30 B-52Gs, recognizable by their light beige underbellies and the absence of bomb racks under their wings; their 20,000 lbs. of bombs are crammed into barn-sized bomb bays. Then came the older Ds, which are probably the world's meanest-looking aircraft, with two dozen 500-lb. bombs clustered on racks under the wings and 42 stubby 750-pounders inside. Painted pitch black, they looked like the birds of death that they

are. Of all the 80 or so aircraft I watched depart, only one of them had to use its "drag bag"—the drag parachute used to abort a takeoff because of a technical difficulty. A reserve craft quickly took its place. That mass departure, timed to the split second, was a feat the Strategic Air Command ought to teach the world's commercial airlines.

The ferocious intensity of the raids stunned even the 11,000 airmen at Andersen and the 90,000 Guamanians for whom the sight of B-52s and bomb-laden trucks has been routine since 1965. Base security measures were tighter than ever: information officers would not comment on operational matters; pilots and crewmen were ordered not to talk to outsiders. Such strictness was understandable—but almost certainly the North Vietnamese knew far in advance that the raiders were on their way. One of the permanent features of life in Guam is a radar-studded Soviet trawler that works just a few miles west of the island.

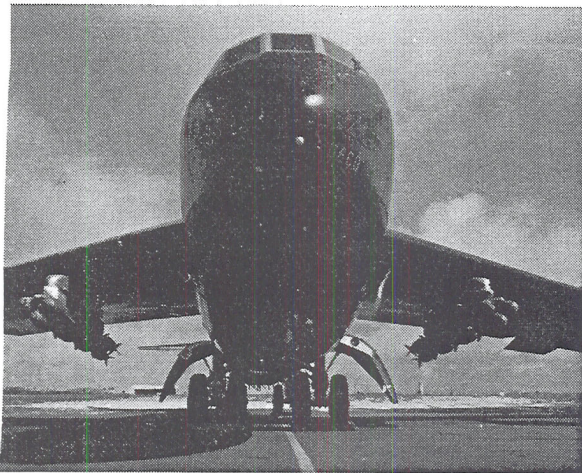
Perhaps the greatest single reason for the new grimness here was that air and ground crews knew there now was a good chance that not all the planes would return. "We've got a hell of a lot more excitement than we need these days," said a veteran of 238 Viet Nam missions. In fact, the chances of being shot down over the North were slightly greater than was the case in the B-17

paign, only one B-52 had been lost in combat in seven years and 100,000 sorties in Indochina. Yet in the past two weeks, 15 were lost—each with a crew of six, most of whom are listed either as missing or captured. Why the high toll? First, as Air Force spokesmen are quick to point out, the B-52s were invading the “most heavily defended anti-aircraft area in the world”—at least in conventional-weapons terms. Since the October bombing halt, the Soviet Union has shipped enormous quantities of missiles and improved radar systems into the North, and the North Vietnamese fired them this round with a prodigality never before displayed. U.S. Air Force officials estimate that 50 to 60 SAM “telephone poles” were fired at each three-plane B-52 formation, or “cell.” While a cell’s electronic defenses can cope with a number of incoming missiles, volleys as large as those were difficult to block completely. And because the B-52s lack the agility of the smaller U.S. planes, they cannot dodge missiles that crack the B-52s’ defenses, or, with their huge supply of inflammable fuel, survive a SAM hit as Phantoms sometimes do.

One of the most troubling aspects of the Nixon blitz—quite apart from the death inflicted on its victims—was that his show of overweening force in-

creased the U.S. investment in lives, prisoners and prestige. This happened just at a point when the public mind believed that that investment was about to be liquidated. The President, who surely wants the war over as much as any American, seemed for a time to be raising his own ante, apparently making it more difficult for the U.S. to extricate itself from Southeast Asia. One State Department dissenter from the bombing observed gloomily early last week: “Tomorrow it may be different, but all reason and logic and history are against the North Vietnamese making substantive concessions because of the bombing.”

Hanoi, in fact, called the heavy U.S. air losses “America’s Dien Bien Phu of the skies” and anticipated the halt by suggesting it would be seen by the North Vietnamese as an admission of American weakness. That was doubtless boasting for effect. But what concessions, if any, either side is now prepared to make remains cloaked in the secrecy of the exchanges between the White House and Hanoi that led to the agreement to go back to the table—exchanges that conceivably may have been by cable directly between the President and North Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong, as they were in October. Around the White House there is a



B-52 STRATEGIC BOMBER POISED ON RUNWAY

and B-24 days of World War II. Then the loss rate was one to 64; last week it was closer to one to 50.

The strain showed. More than anyone else, the airmen wanted to believe that peace was indeed at hand. “The let-down was just killing,” said Captain James H.S. Train, a veteran of more than 200 missions who is now on his sixth combat tour. “We’re just hanging on by our fingernails.” Later another flyer warned: “Just don’t pass out any more peace rumors.”

Since the arrival of a second B-52 wing last spring, Andersen has been jampacked. Many ground crewmen were forced to move into hastily assembled prefabs and tents to make room for new flight crews in their comforta-

ble, mostly air-conditioned barracks. If ground crews weren’t being kept so busy, the griping would have been heavy. As it was, however, armorers and mechanics now were putting in 16-hour days and seven-day weeks. Though precise turnaround time to prepare a B-52 for another run is classified, the usual period that is required for regular maintenance and preparation is about 16 hours.

Enough air crewmen were brought in from the U.S. to keep the number of missions per crew to a level of about three per week. Each mission involved a 17-hour workday, including twelve hours in the air as well as pre- and post-flight briefings and debriefings. Meals were taken on board: some flyers preferred the older D models because they have a small stove on which a TV-style dinner can be cooked. On the Gs, cold box lunches are the rule. Crews are rotated home after a maximum of 179 days under a program code-named “Bullet Shot,” but departure notices from U.S. bases are not always so meticulously planned. One pilot, whose wife was out shopping when his orders arrived, was reduced to leaving a note on the kitchen table, telling her he had gone off to 179 days of war.

headly sense of having gambled and won. Says one aide: “The North Vietnamese underestimated what Richard Nixon would do. He had given them warning, and once it became clear that they were diddling us, he ordered the bombing. Now they’ve had time to look around and see what he can do. He was completely aware of the mounting pressure, but he stood tall.”

Implicit in the mood is the conviction that should he be “diddled” again in Paris, yet another blitz will be ordered. If Hanoi does not resume the talks in the proper vein, says a source close to the President, “he’ll turn it up full blast again.” The U.S. expects Hanoi in particular to:

1) return to its earlier position of an unconditional release of the American P.O.W.s;

2) agree to a post-cease-fire National Council of Reconciliation that is not a disguised coalition government or an independent governmental structure;

3) accept an international force to supervise the cease-fire with enough men and muscle to be able to carry out its mission;

4) join in some recognition of the Demilitarized Zone as a provisional boundary between two Viet Nams, neither of which will impose its will by force on the other.

All that may now be a very large agenda for North Viet Nam to swallow, and the U.S. thinks it will have some indication of how things will go when talks between technical experts of both sides resume in Paris this week. And, since the full substance of negotiations and the reason for their resumption has not been made fully public, both sides in the end may be able to interpret any agreement as having won points and saved face.

Though the history of the war and North Viet Nam’s will to wage it argues against it, it is always possible that Nixon’s show of force may pay off, and he will succeed in largely getting what he wants. Other Nixon gambles have paid off in the past. The Cambodian invasion, widely and correctly criticized at the time for spreading the war into yet another country, nevertheless helped speed the withdrawal of U.S. troops. And the mining of Haiphong Harbor and the resumption of the bombing in the North last spring did not bring the U.S. to the edge of World War III as so many feared, or even result in the cancellation of the Moscow summit. Rather, they are now credited with nudging the North Vietnamese toward the bargaining table. Now the new bombing has succeeded in getting the talks scheduled again. Certainly, the Russians and the Chinese took the blitz on Hanoi and Haiphong with a measure of resigned acceptance.

But even if it brings the planned results, the bombing will not soon be forgotten or forgiven by many Americans, by much of the rest of the world, or by North Viet Nam, a country with which

THE NATION

the U.S. will eventually have to come to terms.

And what if it does not work? What happens if the talks begin again, without the hoped-for "good will" on the part of the North? Presumably, Nixon will be in an even more uncomfortable position than he was before the bombing. He will have gained nothing but the renewed mistrust of many European statesmen

as well as a large segment of the American public. Having so dramatically expressed his dissatisfaction with the current demands of the North, like their insistence on tying the fate of American prisoners together with that of political prisoners in the South, it would be doubly difficult now to turn around and accede to any more of those demands. If anything, the bombing, far from making

future negotiations easier, could make them even more arduous.

The Administration clearly does not think so, by its own rationale for starting—and stopping—the blitz against North Viet Nam. Says Kissinger, once burned and choosing his words with care: "We expect to have serious negotiations and have some reason to believe we will have serious negotiations."

Outrage and Relief

The bombing stirred mixed but predominantly critical reactions in the U.S. and round the world. Most of America's European allies were officially silent. The themes of world reaction ranged from outrage, to a more moderate sadness, to a kind of unenthusiastic sympathy for the President's implacable line. Only on Taiwan and in Saigon were the raids greeted with almost unmitigated satisfaction. Then, with the bombing halt, came expressions of relief and hope mixed with recrimination. A sampling of reactions:

BEFORE THE BOMBING HALT

The *Times* of London: "He [Nixon] ordered the most pulverizing saturation bombing against the wretched Vietnamese people which even this war has seen...This is not the conduct of a man who wants peace very badly, but of one whose priorities have significantly altered since last October."

The national executive committee of the British Labor Party: "This continued slaughter of the Vietnamese people is a complete contradiction of the statements made by both Mr. Nixon and Dr. Kissinger."

Three Labor M.P.s from Coventry sent a telegram to President Nixon that read: "As Members of Parliament for Coventry, the first British city to be martyred by mass bombing, we urge you to end the mass bombing in Viet Nam."

France's largest weekly, *L'Express*: "In this poker game of life, Nixon is a master. By means of this nearly blind monster, the B-52, he has discarded forever an assumption. Mr. Nixon is no longer, and will never again be, a respectable man. That is, if he ever was one."

Le Figaro, a centrist French daily not noted for its pro-Americanism, took a more conciliatory tone: "As for throwing the entire responsibility for the failure of the talks solely on the American Government, it is good polemics at most."

Die Zeit, a liberal Hamburg weekly: "Nixon's bombing war taxes the faith of his allies." It is "nothing but terror and torture; torture with a method in order to make the North Vietnamese pliable. The bombs fall on military targets, but they also hit hospitals and schools, women and children...Even allies must call this a crime against humanity...The American credibility has been shattered."

Tass, the Soviet news agency, avoided blaming Nixon and instead said that the Pentagon was responsible: "The list of bloody crimes of the American military has been extended by thousands of new victims. The new monstrous crimes of the American military push further away the possibility of a peaceful settlement."

Indira Gandhi's New Congress Party drafted a resolution condemning the bombing: "It is the most horrible tragedy in man's recorded history. A small country whose valiant people desire nothing more than achieving their national identity are being subjected to indiscriminate bombing of the civilian population in a senseless desire to impose the will of an outside power."

Peking's Foreign Ministry: "Should the U.S. Government disregard the desire of the people of Viet Nam and obstinately persist in its war of aggression, the Chinese people will, as always, resolutely perform their internationalist duty and give all-out support and assistance to the Vietnamese people till complete victory is won." Premier Chou En-lai said

that the renewed bombing could endanger the improved Chinese-American relations.

The Saigon daily newspaper *Tin Song*, regarded as an unofficial government spokesman: "To place Hanoi in a setting of terror and nightmare as to whether [the U.S.] is bombing or not, and when, is indeed the most meritorious reprisal against the equivocal Communist tricks at the [Paris] conference."

The *New York Times*: "President Nixon has resorted once more to naked force to try to obtain his own larger objectives in Southeast Asia...However much Hanoi may be responsible for disrupting the negotiations—which is a highly disputed point—civilized man will be horrified at the renewed spectacle of the world's mightiest air force mercilessly pounding a small Asian nation in an abuse of national power and disregard of humanitarian principles."

Conservative Columnist William F. Buckley: "Let's get it straight: Richard Nixon's resumption of the bombing is the logical, not the illogical, the honorable not the dishonorable, consequence of the breakdown of the negotiations in Paris as the result of North Vietnamese Mickey Mouse."

The *Chicago Tribune*: "The decision to resume massive bombing above the 20th parallel may be accounted as the latest in a series of gambles...But it is obvious that the return to massive bombing entails risks, and that if the policy does not produce a change of heart in the enemy soon we are again faced with the disheartening prospect of a lingering war."

The *Los Angeles Times*: "Of all the errors made in the war, of all the confusions of illusion and reality, of all the willful uses of arbitrary power, this is one of the most shocking, because the means used are so grossly disproportionate to the ends sought."

James Howell, chief economist at the First National Bank of Boston: "There was a new consensus emerging, which of course included getting out of Viet Nam. The President was re-elected by a landslide. But now Nixon is ripping this consensus to pieces. The President is picking and tearing at the most sensitive nerve and the outcome is bound to be an upsurge of the type of dissent that appeared to be dying out."

AFTER THE BOMBING HALT

British Prime Minister Edward Heath, who had been under strong opposition pressure to speak out against the bombing: "It is easy to demand condemnatory statements, but past experience strongly suggests that they are not always the best way of bringing peace nearer."

Hamilton Fish Armstrong, former editor of *Foreign Affairs*: "The President has a second chance now, but nothing will justify the bombing of the North. Millions of Americans are disgusted by it and feel uneasy about not being given any rationale or explanation."

Historian Theodore Roszak: "The basic line of policy has not changed. Nixon remains in the same league as those who bombed Guernica and he does not get out of that league simply by letting up on the bombing here and there."

French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann: "Hope is re-born." The French national radio called the bombing halt "the best news of the end of 1972," but scorned Washington's carrot-and-stick tactics.

Former Ambassador Averell Harriman: "I thanked God that he stopped the bombing. The damage done really is a national disgrace. And if anything it has made the negotiations more difficult."