

## U.S. Planes Step Up Attacks in the South

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Thursday, Jan. 18 (AP)—The United States command announced yesterday that American war planes had attacked enemy positions throughout South Vietnam in the highest number of strikes in more than a month.

The command said that fighter-bombers had carried out 311 raids in the South during the 24-hour period ended at 8 A.M. yesterday.

In addition, United States B-52 bombers flew about 90 strikes in South Vietnam during the same period, dropping many tons of explosives on North Vietnamese troop concentrations, staging areas and supply, caches, the command said.

All bombing and other offensive operations over North Vietnam have been halted because of an order by President Nixon said to reflect progress in the peace talks. But the United States command has reported an increasing number of air strikes over the South, along with continuing air operations over Laos and Cambodia.

The command said that B-52 strikes were carried out yesterday in South Vietnam from the northernmost province of Quang Tri to the southern Mekong Delta. But most missions were reported in two hotly contested areas: the Saigon River corridor northwest of the capital and Quang Tri Province just below the demilitarized zone.

The targets in both cases were described as troop concentrations, supply dumps and

staging areas. United States Air Force F-4 Phantom jet pilots also reported destroying two trucks and a tank northwest of Quang Tri city.

Several secondary explosions and fires were reported after the F-4 attacks, the United States command said, and the Phantoms also struck other enemy targets around the devastated provincial capital.

In the river corridor about 50 miles northwest of Saigon, B-52's flew 10 missions of three planes each against enemy targets, the United States command said. There have been reports of a considerable North Vietnamese troop build-up in the rubber plantation region there.

In other action, enemy gunners shelled the Danang air base and the provincial capital of Quang Ngai, 75 miles to the south. A bridge 20 miles east of Saigon was said to have been blown up by a floating mine.

One South Vietnamese was wounded and six buildings and one aircraft were damaged when 20 Soviet-made 122-mm. rockets hit the Danang air base and an adjoining village before dawn yesterday. No American casualties were reported.

Four 122-mm. rockets hit Quang Ngai city. Two civilians were reported killed and two wounded. Two young girls were reported to have been killed when the mine shattered the bridge on a road east of Saigon.

On the northern front, four South Vietnamese marines

were reported killed and 15 wounded when North Vietnamese artillery and mortar crews fired 350 rounds into their positions. The enemy followed the shelling with a ground attack. The Saigon command said 11 North Vietnamese had been killed.

### Cambodians Report Gains

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Jan. 17 (Reuters)—Cambodian forces were said today to have driven Communist troops from outposts along the banks of the Mekong River, reopening the vital supply route between the capital and the South Vietnamese border.

A military command spokesman said today that Government troops had recaptured the last of the nine positions, including two district capitals and several midstream islands, that mixed units of Cambodian Communists and North Vietnamese soldiers overran last week.

The weekly convoy of about a dozen river freighters and small tankers that has been held up at the South Vietnamese port of Yung Tau for some days was reportedly scheduled to leave for Phnom Penh tonight.

The Cambodian command said its troops reoccupied the last river bank positions yesterday, about 40 miles southeast of Phnom Penh. Western military experts now believe the Communists may have been ferrying troops across the Mekong River on a large scale and that they had not intended to try to occupy the river banks permanently.