

## Minesweeping Without Result So Far, U.S. Says

NY TIMES

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 8—

The Defense Department said today that it had yet to find and recover or to explode any mines after two days of minesweeping in Haiphong Harbor and in the Gulf of Tonkin. Jerry W. Friedheim, the department spokesman, said that minesweeping helicopters had come "up to within sight of the anchorage where several freighters had been anchored" in Haiphong.

The area is the upper ship channel leading to the gulf from the Cua Cam, a river running eastward on Haiphong's northern side.

The Pentagon has said that the mines were first laid last May 8 and 9 and were fitted with devices that activated them on May 11.

"Several thousands" were dropped at seven ports and "all of the major inland waterways were mined at one point or another during the campaign," Mr. Friedheim said.

### Some Mines Held Inactive

According to the Pentagon, all the mines laid were of a type that rests on the bottom. They included magnetic, acoustic and pressure-sensitive devices that become inactive and safe at "some predetermined time after planting," the Pentagon stated.

Mr. Friedman said that he thought that some of the mines were now inert and some active.

A 16-ship United States Navy force is operating in the waters off Haiphong with helicopter-towed minesweeping sleds that simulate the passage of a ship.

The Pentagon said Feb. 21 that 10 merchant ships had left Haiphong since the mining took place and that 16 remained.

The 10 ships, the first of which left port on Feb. 9, traveled at their risk, the Pentagon said at the time.

At his daily news briefing at the Pentagon, Mr. Friedheim was questioned on the success of the minesweeping.

"How come no detonations?" a reporter asked Mr. Friedheim. "We'll report detonations when and if they occur" he replied. "There haven't been any reports."

"Was it all a big bluff that Hanoi bought?" another reporter asked.

"No," Mr. Friedheim replied.

Asked later if any mines had been "found and recovered," he answered "no" again.

Asked for an explanation, he

said that "one possibility" was that some of the mines had deactivated themselves. Mr.

Friedheim then said that he expected there would be some explosions during the sweeping operation.

He said that one third of all the mines laid were in the Haiphong area. Meetings are now under way with Hanoi officials to discuss the training of North Vietnamese crews to clear inland waterways of mines.

Three types of minesweeping devices are used, the Pentagon said.

The simplest is known as "M.O.P." and is magnetized orange pipe 33 feet long and 10 inches in diameter. It is

filled with plastic foam to make it float and is dragged along through the water.

The M.O.P. is used in shallow water or in situations where risk might be high to more expensive and sophisticated devices.

The most complex is the Mark 105, a hydrofoil that is dragged through the water and that sets up "the magnetic signature of a ship" by trailing two electrodes that send current between them, creating the magnetic outline of a ship.

The third is the Mark 104, a small turbine engine with a propeller that makes ship-like noises as it is dragged through the water.