

2020 sag

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bomb 1 (normass/deepe)

SAIGON, MAY 8—Intelligence sources here report Washington policymakers are preparing to stop American bombing raids over North Vietnam in the very near future.

The move, if effected, would come at a time when the visible flow of men and supplies ~~scarcely~~ southwards from North Vietnam has reached high proportions.

"We've caught a ~~prisoner~~ North Vietnamese prisoner who said it took only eleven days ~~to~~ to travel by truck from the Hanoi-Haiphong area into the ~~South~~ South," the sources report. "In the Ashau Valley, we've caught a prisoner who had been in the South only four ~~or~~ days. These guys get on a ~~bus~~ vehicle—and their next bus stop is ~~the~~ the South."

—more reuter

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bomb 2 (normass/deepe)

American military officers here, confused and irked, by what they term the "~~upcoming~~ ^{Raid S} "upcoming standdown" of bombing operations over North Vietnam are adjusting their tactical operations to meet the forthcoming Washington policy change, these sources ~~said~~ said. These tactical operations include not ~~only~~ only the aerial bombing raids, but also the ~~also~~ clandestine ground operations into the North, which ~~have~~ have continued on a restricted basis south ~~of~~ of the 20th parallel since President Lyndon Johnson's ~~April~~ April 1st speech announcing the bombing reduction. The U. S. Navy ~~ship-to-shore~~ ship-to-shore bombardment of the North would ~~also be ceased~~ presumably also be ceased.

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bomb 3 (normass/deepe)

In the past, some of the ~~clan e~~ ^{GROUND} clandestine operations, not only from South Vietnam, but also from neighboring countries, have acted as ground spotters for pinpoint American bombing raids, along with other more sophisticated quasi-political activities, reliable sources report.

Whether ~~southward-bound~~ traffic from North Vietnam has actually reached unprec ~~unprecedented~~ proportions, or whether it has simply become more visible to American reconnaissance planes flying north of the 20th parallel, which has not ~~bee~~ ^{sub} been subject to American bombing raids since April 1, is matter of high-level discussion by ² within the American military command, reliable sources report. Informed sources report ~~the American command h~~ believes that the infiltration into South Vietnam above the 6000-man average late last year, ^{1, 2} but they note that in January before the Tet offensive, the Communists ~~move d~~ ^{roughly 20,000 men} moved two divisions into the south around Khe Sanh.

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bomb 4 (normass/deepe)

The American command has yet to release a recent post-Tet estimate of North Vietnamese infiltration into South Vietnam, ~~also~~ although it is ~~con~~ known to be under serious ~~studies~~ at the Saigon headquarters.

American military officers, as well as Western diplomats, are mystified as to why the American government would ~~unilaterally~~ ~~cease~~ the bombing—rather than ~~to seek~~ seeking to negotiate the ~~net~~ ^{Cessation} reduction in exchange for some reciprocity from the North Vietnamese at the Paris peace talks.

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~~SECRET~~

bomb 5 (normass/deepe)

The move, if effected, would not seem in contradiction to the announced Pentagon policy of preparing to reduce American troops from South Vietnam "in due time."

"I don't understand it," one Western diplomat explained. "I'd have thought the Americans would have negotiated ~~and~~ the reduction of their troops—rather than simply unilaterally announcing this policy. After all, the Americans have only two all-American bargaining points—the ~~bombing of~~ U. S. bombing raids over the North and the American military presence in the South. Why the Americans are giving up these bargaining points without negotiating something in exchange from Hanoi is beyond me."

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bomb 6 (normass/deepe)

Some Western diplomats here believe that in the coming months, if the American bombing raids cease over the North, North Vietnam will "secretly enact a de facto reduction" of activities in the South. Other diplomats, on the more skeptical side of the political ~~spectu~~ spectrum, believe that any North Vietnamese ~~reced~~ reduction "won't amount to a row of peanuts--while they may momentarily disengage from some areas, they'll keep their fox organized units in the South or near the borders, while they press the Viet Cong to attack more."

~~(HANK)~~

(Hank: sorriest my political piece will take more time than I thought. I'll ~~g~~ again try to get it to you tomorrow. This piece comes from a ~~piece~~ very good source and I think ~~the~~ other journalists will come out with it too. Maybe Washington would like to check out why the Americans are announcing troop phase-outs before negotiations as well as this piece. Regards Bev).

--end reuter