

Feb 2 1966

On the Carrier As Raids Resume

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On the second day of resumed raids against North Viet Nam, U. S. Air Force F-105s bombed the port of Ben Thuy, 160 miles south of Hanoi. Other planes struck highway and railroad targets in the southern part of North Viet Nam. A U. S. spokesman said overcast prevented assessment of the damage. In South Viet Nam, 1st Air Cavalry Division soldiers counted 488 Viet Cong dead after eight days of Operation Masher, a sweep near Bong Son, 300 miles northeast of Saigon.

By Beverly Deepe
A Special Correspondent

ABOARD THE CARRIER KITTY HAWK.

At 8:30 a. m. Monday, this carrier launched its first missions after the orders came to end the bombing lull in the American air war against North Viet Nam.

"For days we watched the bombing pause and we thought it was good," one jet pilot said. "Then we watched the news get blacker and blacker when Hanoi didn't want peace. We knew we would have to again go on the mission we'd rather not go on."

Throughout the day the 60,000-ton Kitty Hawk's giant steam catapults sent up plane after plane from its four-acre deck as it cruised the sea 25 miles north of the 17th Parallel at the mouth of the Gulf of Tonkin.

The destroyer Moore protected the northern flank of this attack aircraft carrier, the flagship of the 7th Fleet's

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On a Carrier As Bombings Are Resumed

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striking force. To the east of this giant floating air base another destroyer, the Hubbard, steamed in escort. And in another area a sister ship of the Kitty Hawk, the Ranger, was launching air strikes against targets in North Viet Nam.

The sky over the Kitty Hawk was filled with planes as flight teams headed off to North Viet Nam and other planes circled the ship waiting their turn to land on the flight deck.

The carrier's Cat Company, catapult men in green sweatshirts, calculated deep within the bowels of the ship the steam pressure required for the thick steel catapult cables to lash off the jet planes and conventional aircraft.

The catapults hurled them all aloft—the droop-nosed, double-the-speed-of-sound F-4 Phantoms; the banana-shaped A-6A Intruders, all-weather attack bombers with computerized bombing equipment; the needle-nosed RA-5C twin-jet reconnaissance aircraft; the A-1 Skyraider of Korean War vintage, so old the pilots call them "spads;" the delicate E-2A Hawkeye, a flying radar station called the "super fudd."

NIGHT BRIEFING

The order of President Johnson to resume bombing of North Viet Nam was received on the Kitty Hawk Sunday evening. At 11 p. m., the pilots were called to the ready rooms for briefings. At 2 a. m., in the chilly damp darkness, reconnaissance aircraft packed with millions of dollars worth of radar, electronic hardware and exotic boxes were launched in a prelude to the air strikes.

This floating city carries two Terrier missile batteries capable of hurling supersonic surface-to-air missiles. Its strike aircraft also carry air-to-air missiles with conventional warheads.

In one of the briefing rooms, Cmdr. Royce Williams, 40, commander of the supersonic Phantom jet squadron, described Monday's first mission over North Viet Nam.

"I don't know if we should say it—but we couldn't find the targets. We went over the targets, but because of the weather we weren't successful . . . so we took our alternate target."

None of the pilots who flew the missions wanted their home addresses to be published because one said, "Our wives are getting threatening phone calls at home from the anti-Viet Nam people."