SELECTED STATEMENTS ON VIETNAM

BY DoD AND OTHER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

July 1 - December 31, 1966

(Includes speeches, press conferences, congressional statements, and magazine articles)

Prepared by

[Signature]
SELECTED STATEMENTS ON VIETNAM

1. AIR OPERATIONS
   a. Helicopters
   b. Losses
   c. North Vietnam
   d. Role of Airpower in Counterinsurgency
   e. Sorties/Missions
   f. South Vietnam

2. ALLIES - Assistance of

3. AMMUNITION

4. CASUALTIES (U.S., SVN, Communists)

5. CIVIC ACTION (See REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM)

6. COMPARISONS WITH KOREA

7. CONSTRUCTION/ENGINEERING

8. COST OF WAR

9. DEPLOYMENT OF U.S. FORCES

10. DURATION OF THE WAR (Measure of Progress)

11. GROUND FORCES

12. INTER-SERVICE COOPERATION

Page

1
4
7
26
28
31
37
41
43
47
51
56
57
64
81
84
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. LOGISTICS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Airlift</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Intratheater Airlift</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Sealift</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Shortages</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. MEDICAL CARE</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. MORALE AND QUALITY OF U.S. FORCES</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. NAVAL &amp; MARINE OPERATIONS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Anti-Sea Infiltration</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Carrier-Based Forces (See Also AIR OPERATIONS)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Marines</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Seventh Fleet</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. NORTH VIETNAM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Air Force</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Chinese &amp; Russian Support</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Rate of Infiltration to SVN (See VIET CONG)</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. SAM Missiles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. OBJECTIVE AND COMMITMENT, U. S.</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. PACIFICATION PROGRAM (See REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. POLICY, U. S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. DMZ Violations</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Limited Military Strategy</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Peace Efforts</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. RESCUE AND RECOVERY</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. SOUTH VIETNAM
   a. Elections 188
   b. Ky Government 189
   c. Vietnamese Forces 190

24. VIET CONG
   a. Logistics 193
   b. National Liberation Front 195
   c. Strength 196
   d. Tactics 202
NAME INDEX

Abrams, Creighton W., General
   Vice Chief of Staff, U. S. Army

Ball, George
   Under Secretary of State

Bessom, Frank S., Jr., General, USA
   Commanding General, U. S. Army Material Command

Boylan, George S., Jr., Maj. General, USAF
   DCS, PLANS, MAC

Brown, Harold
   Secretary of the Air Force

Bundy, William P.
   Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs

Chapman, L. F., Lt. General, USMC
   Chief of Staff, USMC

Charles, Robert H.
   Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Installations & Logistics)

Disosway, G. P., General, USAF
   Commander, TAC

Estes, Howell M., Maj. General, USAF
   Commander, MAC

Goldberg, Arthur, Jr.
   U. S. Representative to the U. N.

Greene, Wallace M., General, USMC
   Commandant of the Marine Corps

Harriman, W. Averell
   U. S. Ambassador at Large

Holloway, Bruce K., General
   Vice Chief of Staff, USAF

Humphrey, Hubert
   Vice President of the United States

Ignatius, Paul R.
   Assistant Secretary of Defense (Installations & Logistics)

Johnson, Alexis U.
   Deputy Under Secretary of State
Johnson, Harold K., General, USA
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

Johnson, Lyndon B.
President of the United States

Katzenbach, Nicholas de B
Assistant Secretary of State

Komer, Robert W.
Special Assistant to the President

Lodge, Henry Cabot
U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam

Martin, William K., General, USAF
Commander 15th Air Force SAC

McConnell, John P., General
Chief of Staff, USAF

McDonald, David L., Admiral
Chief of Naval Operations

McGiffert, David E.
Under Secretary of the Army

McNamara, Robert S.
Secretary of Defense

Meeker, Leonard C.
Legal Adviser, Department of State

Moore, Joseph H., USAF
Vice Commander, PACAF

Nitze, Paul H.
Secretary of the Navy

Rostow, Walt
Special Assistant to the President

Rusk, Dean
Secretary of State

Sisco, Joseph S.
Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs

Taylor, Maxwell D., General, USA
Special Consultant to the President
Vance, Cyrus
    Deputy Secretary of Defense

Westmoreland, William C., General, USA
    Commander, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam

Wheeler, Earle G., General, USA
    Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Worley, Robert F., Maj. General, USAF
    Assistant D/CS, Operations Command & Control, TAC
NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Meeting with the Press on arrival in Saigon
DATE: October 10, 1966

Question: Unintelligible (about helicopter pilots).

Secretary McNamara: There are no helicopters that I am aware of here or in the States that have no pilots assigned to them. We have about 1,800 helicopters in South Vietnam today, an extraordinarily large number. You out here are better familiar than I with the elementary importance of those helicopters to our operations. They, in effect, are substituting for automotive transportation, for truck transportation, providing an unprecedented degree of mobility to our forces. As a matter of fact, the 1,800 helicopters we have here today exceed the number -- the total helicopter inventory of all Free World forces, excluding U.S. forces, and of all Sino-Soviet bloc forces worldwide. It's a tremendous number. We're going to increase it. We have no hesitancy in predicting that both the supply of helicopters and pilots will permit that increase in addition to permitting the maintenance and full operational capability of our present inventory.

Question: Unintelligible.

Secretary McNamara: We are substantially expanding the training of helicopter pilots, but there is no problem of maintaining and manning the helicopters we now have at the present time.
Since the 1st of January 1962 through the 31st of July this year, our helicopters in South Vietnam have flown 2.5 million sorties, carried 3.5 million personnel, and lifted 180,000 tons of cargo. They evacuated nearly 47,000 patients of all categories, thus helping to reduce deaths from wounds from a norm of about 10 out of a hundred to now about one out of a hundred. Because of the rapid evacuation these helicopters provide, many severely injured patients are now reaching hospitals who would have died in the field under similar combat conditions just a few short years ago.

While establishing this record, we have been losing only one helicopter out of about every 16,000 sorties of all types flown.

To give you an idea of how greatly our helicopter effort has increased over the past year, let me quote just one more set of figures. During July 1966, compared with July 1965, we flew four times as many sorties and lifted four times as many personnel; we logged three times as many flying hours and lifted more than three times as much cargo.

The war itself is, in a sense, a logistics war -- a war in which superior equipment, firepower and tremendous mobility distinguish it from the way the French fought the Vietminh. For example, we are using about 1,900 helicopters -- more than Russia and Red China own together -- and 1,800 airplanes.
One cannot visit South Vietnam without being impressed with the role the helicopter is playing there. Since the 1st of January 1962 through the 31st of July this year, our helicopters in South Vietnam have flown 4.5 million sorties, carried 3.5 million personnel, and lifted 180,000 tons of cargo. They evacuated nearly 47,000 patients of all categories. During this time we have lost -- from enemy action -- one helicopter for each 16,000 sorties. For purposes of comparison -- comparing July 1966 with July 1965 -- we flew in July 1966 four times as many sorties and lifted four times as many personnel. We logged three times as many flying hours and lifted more than three times as much cargo.
AIR OPERATIONS - Losses

NAME: 
OCCASION: 
DATE: 

President Lyndon B. Johnson
News Conference at the White House
August 9, 1966

Q: Mr. President, what can you tell us to sort of update the situation in Vietnam? We took some pretty bad losses there over the weekend in aircraft, and some of our ground troops have been in a pretty strong fight for the last couple of days. How do you appraise the military situation there now?

A: I don't see any change for the worse at all. Our plane losses are under those that we have estimated. Our helicopter losses are under those estimated.

Sometimes, as you know, you have heavier losses than you expect, and sometimes much smaller. Weather, good luck on their part, bad luck on our part—there are a lot of factors that enter into those things.

But I wouldn't say that the losses are unexpected. As a matter of fact, I reviewed with Secretary McNamara last night, Secretary Rusk and others. We are under our estimates on both helicopters and planes.

***
AIR OPERATIONS - Losses

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: News Briefing, the Pentagon
DATE: September 22, 1966

SECRETARY McNAMARA: A service's loss rate and its actual loss of aircraft depends upon the type of target its assigned, and the area in which that target's located, as North Vietnam versus South Vietnam, armed reconnaissance versus petroleum depots, et cetera.

There is no significant difference between the services in their loss rates by type of target. That is to say, the Navy's operations against armed reconnaissance in, in, let's say, the southern part of North Vietnam yields approximately the same losses as does the Air Force in relation to weight of effort.

PRESS: Then the Navy has additional harder missions?

SECRETARY MCNAMARA: It has not harder missions than the Air Force but higher loss missions than were initially estimated in relation to the plan. There's been a shift of effort as between Air Force and Navy, but periodically there's speculation as to which Service is the most efficient in combat. And quite frankly I think they're both doing a magnificent job and I see no difference as measured by loss rates in their effectiveness in combat and when I state that the actual losses of the Air Force are somewhat less than planned and the Navy are somewhat more than planned, I don't want this misinterpreted, as stating that the Navy is losing more planes than the Air Force or is less efficient than the Air Force or is less competent than the Air Force. Such is not the case.
Q. Mr. Secretary, these air losses in the last few days, are they due almost entirely to MIG’s, and, if so, do we know who is flying the MIG’s?

SECRETARY McNAMARA. No, the number of losses to MIG’s is very small.
My recollection is—check me on this—that one aircraft has been lost to MIG’s in the past 2 weeks.

UNDER SECRETARY VANCE. That is correct.
Q. Are these mostly SAM’s?
SECRETARY McNAMARA. No, mostly antiaircraft caused.
Q. Are they conventional?
SECRETARY McNAMARA. Yes.
Question: Mr. President, to go back to the subject of Vietnam, what has been the effect of our intensified air strikes against military targets in North Vietnam—what's been the effect on their rate of infiltration? In other words, what have been the noticeable results since we started hitting their oil depots?

President: The evaluations that we have, and they're still coming in—we have new pictures that are being analyzed at this moment—but the evaluations that we have indicate that about 86 per cent of the known petroleum storage capacity in North Vietnam was hit the other evening in a very accurate target operation over the POL (petroleum, oil and lubricants) targets in the vicinity of Hanoi and Haiphong. The latest estimate of the storage capacity actually destroyed that has come in from the field is 57 per cent.

In other words, 86 per cent of the storage was hit, 57 per cent, they estimate, is destroyed. I cannot embrace those figures because the pictures are not complete, but the general officers who have reviewed this told me this morning that they think both estimates are within reason and they think it was a very successful operation, and I think that every general officer carrying responsibilities either in Vietnam or in the Pentagon as well as most of our career experienced diplomatic observers think that this action—at this time—was required by the events of the time.
The recent bombing of the oil storage depots around Hanoi was a military action against clear military objectives. The decision was carefully weighed. It was designed for two purposes -- to slow down the rate of infiltration, which has been taking a toll of allied lives; and to help convince the North Vietnamese leadership that their aggression in the South will be too costly to sustain.

Now, these installations were close to the population centers and I'd like to point out the extraordinary skill of our Air Force, both in the training of the men and the manner in which they carried out this operation. There wasn't a single bomb that fell outside of the target areas, and they were rather restricted target areas, and I think we ought to talk with pride about the skill that our airmen showed and the danger they submitted themselves to in order to achieve that objective.

I wish somebody would talk about the kind of terrorist activity that the Viet Cong engage in when they murder the village leaders, the school teachers, when they throw bombs into restaurants and injure innocent people in the streets of Saigon and other cities. But, as far as the United States Air Force is concerned, they have been extremely careful and the results show it.
QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, having said that you don't want to destroy North Vietnamese cities and that our objectives are limited, are we approaching or is there a practical limit to the use of air power as you envision it over North Vietnam, given that we have destroyed a good part of their oil?

SECRETARY MCNAMARA: No, I don't believe we have approached a limit to the use of airpower over North Vietnam. As they increase the movement or as they attempt to increase the movement of men and material along the lines of communication it may be necessary for us to further increase our air effort there.

In the month of June the number of air sorties against the line of communication in North Viet Nam totalled 7,000. That was up almost seventy percent over the level of March. If they continue to expand their traffic over those lines of communications we may have to increase our air operations still further.

Q. Mr. Secretary, would you say that the bombing of the oil installations, so far, has produced the kind of military gains that you had hoped they would produce?

A. Well, it is much too early to try to draw a direct connection between those and the flow of material. Naturally, we will be watching that very closely. But, certainly, POL that is knocked out is not available to move trucks on the same scale as before, and something has got to give somewhere on terms of shortening up on the various tasks undertaken, including the infiltration tasks. But it is much too early to try to make any particular assessment on that particular point.
AIR OPERATIONS - North Vietnam

NAME: Lt. Gen. Joseph H. Moore, Vice Commander, PACAF  
(former Commander of 7th Air Force and D/Cmdr for Air Operations, MACV)  
OCCASION: Press Conference, Washington, D.C.  
DATE: July 13, 1966

With respect to interdiction in North Vietnam, they have been hurt and have been forced to make sacrifices. Although these pressures may not by themselves be decisive, added to the setbacks elsewhere and lack of forthright external military support from the Communist world, in my opinion continued selective bombing of militarily significant targets in North Vietnam should convince the Hanoi Government to consider some form of disengagement.

NAME: Cyrus R. Vance, Deputy Secretary of Defense  
OCCASION: "Face the Nation"  
DATE: July 17, 1966

SECRETARY VANCE: . . . Our attacks, as I have said before, cannot shut off the supply of men and supplies into the South. However, it can impose a ceiling and we believe it will do so.

MR. ROWAN: Has there been any indication that the attacks on petroleum and the oil storage have had that effect?

SECRETARY VANCE: It is much too early to see what the results of the strikes on the petroleum will be. We do not believe that the results will be discernible for several weeks or months to come. * * *

MR. AGRONSKY: Well, you can by aerial observation determine the extent of the destruction.

SECRETARY VANCE: Oh, yes, we have done that. * * * We have struck 90 percent of their oil storage capacity and our attacks to date have destroyed approximately two-thirds of that capacity.
The men who conducted the bombings on the military targets, the oil supplies of Hanoi and Haiphong, did a very careful but very perfect job. They hit about 90 percent of the total capacity of that storage, and almost 70 percent of it was destroyed.

Our reports indicate that there were few civilian lives lost, if any. One estimate was that one civilian was killed. He was the one who was at the alarm center.

We were very careful not to get out of the target area, in order not to affect the civilian population. But we, with our allies, are going to continue to do everything that we can to deter the aggressor and to go to the peace table at the earliest possible date.
I think it would be a mistake to suppose that since infiltration is continuing, therefore, the bombing has no point. Because that overlooks what might have happened in terms of infiltration had the bombing not occurred. And we know that the bombing has made infiltration substantially more difficult; that many supplies, military supplies, that have come down the trails have been destroyed by the bombing; that there is much less POL to support the trucks that bring men and arms into the South than there was before. We know that there are fewer trucks to bring men and arms down into South Viet-Nam. So the problem is not whether the bombing has stopped the infiltration, but what the infiltration might have been without it; and whether the bombing has made it more difficult and costly for the other side.
NAME: General William C. Westmoreland, Commander
US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
OCCASION: News Conference at the President's Texas Ranch
DATE: August 14, 1966

Question: General, in that same context, could you tell us your estimates on the effectiveness of our bombing of the North in slowing down the North Vietnamese?

Answer: Our air interdiction program has achieved considerable success in disrupting the land routes of communications, destroying trucks, ferries, and barges operating off-shore. The bombing of the POL (petroleum, oil, and lubricants) has had an impact. This has not reflected itself yet in large measure, but I anticipate that it will in the near future. This bombing program to the North, however, is supplemental to the battle in the South.

NAME: Dean Rusk, Secretary of State
OCCASION: White House Release summarizing Presentations to the Cabinet
DATE: August 25, 1966

QUESTION: What evidence do you have of the results of the bombings of the fuel depots? What has been the effect of those?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: We have photographic evidence of the destruction of the oil tanks and oil capacity. I think the most dramatic effect of the attacks on the petroleum depots to date has been interruption of the supply of petroleum products to North Vietnam since the major attacks of June 29. As a result of that interruption, in conjunction with the destruction of the storage facilities and hence stored oil, a very dramatic decline in the supplies of petroleum products within North Vietnam.
NAME: William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs
OCCASION: Interview: NBC MEET THE PRESS
DATE: September 4, 1966

MR. SPIVAK: ... What do you think we are accomplishing by this continuation of bombing?

MR. BUNDY: I think very definitely we are sharply reducing the rates of infiltration of men and equipment that would otherwise be taking place, Mr. Spivak. We never thought we could choke it off. No student of bombing would have thought that.

Secondly, I think the bombing puts pressure on Hanoi and the people in the North, but Hanoi's decision-makers principally that at a certain point in conjunction with an adverse trend from the standpoint in South Viet Nam -- which I think is the critical factor -- will, I think, play a decisive complementary role in bringing them to the decision to call off this military effort and to work out a way to a peaceful solution.

NAME: President Lyndon B. Johnson
OCCASION: Remarks Upon Arrival at Cox Municipal Airport, Vandalia, Ohio
DATE: September 5, 1966

United States planes are reducing supply depots, bridges, oil fields, and military installations to rubble. The accuracy of the strikes are astonishing. We hit our targets and they are military, not civilian.
The air action is not for the purpose of destruction for destruction's sake, but, like the counterpart ground action in the south, is to present to the Hanoi leaders so depressing a prospect of increasing loss as to cause them to change their ways."

* * * * *

ANOTHER ASPECT OF BOMBING IN THE NORTH is the effort to slow down and make costly the infiltration of reinforcements. On this General Taylor said in the same major address in Tokyo: "I would emphasize that no one ever thought that airpower alone could stop this infiltration. However, we knew from our experience in World War II and in Korea that the proper use of airpower could limit the numbers of enemy ground forces which could be supported in combat in the south and thus would place a certain ceiling on their total strength in the field. No one knew then, in fact no one knows exactly now, what that ceiling is. But we are quite confident that the air campaign has indeed made difficult and costly the continuation of the aggression from the north. The feverish efforts of the North Vietnamese during the 37-day bombing pause after Christmas to repair bomb damage and to move men and supplies in daylight over roads previously impassable attested to the effectiveness of the bombing campaign."

What our bombing in the north has done is two things: It has made the rate of -- it set a ceiling on the total capacity of that logistical system to put forces in the south. Not enough, however, to force a radical reduction in the rate of infiltration. It has set a ceiling, and has made that infiltration and the support of the men in the south more costly.

Secondly, it has imposed on the north a cost for continuing to conduct the war in the south. Not a sufficient cost by itself to them to end the war, and I know of no one in the government who believes that this kind of bombing was in itself sufficient, but the two things that have been accomplished are real. You set a ceiling and increase the cost of infiltration, and we have made them bear a substantial burden for continuing this war in the south.
These air operations by Navy and USAF forces are designed to assist in the attainment of objectives in the south. The air strikes are directed at the interdiction of railroads, highways and bridges, and military traffic. Supply and communication depots are also attacked. These operations cannot entirely stop the movement of men and material but they have made that movement increasingly difficult to maintain.

"We have not stopped the infiltration from the North, this is true. We also have not laid to waste the People's Republic of North Vietnam. We have continually struck at North Vietnam with our tactical fighters destroying lines of communication, roads, bridges, rail lines, and of late, their oil reserves.

"But as yet, for a myriad of considerations, it is not national policy to destroy village upon village and city upon city, thus reducing the People's Republic of North Vietnam to a point of obliteration.

"Such action would be a war to a final conclusion. And this is not our stated purpose. Our national aims are not that severe. We merely desire peace in South Vietnam and we wish to achieve this at the lowest level of armed conflict necessarily imposed upon us by the northern invader..."
Three of the five aircraft carriers of the Seventh Fleet rotate to Yankee station and fly approximately half of the strikes against North Vietnam targets. The Navy-Marine Corps team provides approximately half of the strikes and support missions in Vietnam.

In strikes against a wide range of military targets in North Vietnam our fighter bombers have made it increasingly difficult and costly for the Hanoi government to support the aggression underway to the South. Combining determination, discrimination and restraint, these strikes have served as a promising technique of "strategic persuasion." That type of persuasion, consistent with our government's humanitarian policy, is permitting and urging the enemy to place reason ahead of necessity as the guide for his further course of action.
"Beginning, as we now know in the middle of 1964, with the first organized units entering in December, North Viet-Nam began to send South not merely individual Vietnamese but organized units of its own army. Hanoi obviously was trying for a knock-out blow during 1965."

"At that point, after so many years of provocation, the United States began carefully measured and precisely restrained aerial attacks in the North and introduced its own regular combat units into South Viet-Nam. We knew, and have always known, that in the last analysis the South Vietnamese must win their own struggle to determine their future. But, in quite simple terms, it had become clear that the vicious arithmetic of guerrilla warfare would have brought victory to the Viet Cong and their North Vietnamese masters without these measures on our part."

Secretary McNamara: I think you have to, in answering that question, remember the three objectives that we had when we started the bombing. The first was to increase the morale of the South Vietnamese military forces and civilian population. The bombing started in February of '65. That nation was under intense pressure from the North at that time, and this was a major act by the United States indicating to them they could expect continued support from this country. Surely we have achieved that objective. The second objective was to reduce the flow of men and equipment from the North to the South and/or to increase the cost of that infiltration of men and equipment from the North to the South. Very clearly we have increased the cost. How much we have reduced the flow, we can't say. But it's very clear that North Vietnam has diverted about 300,000 men from other activities in their society to the repair of the lines of communication over which they are infiltrating men and equipment from the North and which lines of communication have been the primary targets of our bombing in the North. And the third objective, of course, was to make clear to the political leaders and the people of the North that as long as they continued to seek to subvert, destroy, the independence of the peoples of the South, that they will pay a price in the North. I think it is very clear that they are paying a price. We never intended and don't believe now that the bombing of the North will by itself lead to a termination of the activity in the South."
I wonder how many people realize that, when the decision was made to launch air strikes against North Vietnam in retaliation for attacks on our ships and barracks, those strikes were flown by Navy airplanes from the decks of Navy aircraft carriers. Why was that? Well, it was for a number of reasons. It was because the carriers were there. It was because they were ready. And here is a very important point -- since those ships were really U.S. sovereign territory operating on the free high seas, they could be used at the order of our President, at any time, in any manner be chose, without involving such things as base rights in another country.

Our bombers are striking a variety of targets in North Vietnam, both to impede the flow of supplies to the south and to make such support more costly to the North Vietnamese in the hope that this "strategic persuasion" will eventually bring them to the conference table.
AIR OPERATIONS - North Vietnam

NAME: Admiral David L. McDonald, USN, Chief of Naval Operations
OCCASION: Press Conference at Pentagon
DATE: November 16, 1966

QUESTION: What's the payoff, then, in your view, of the Navy bombing of North Vietnam?

ADMIRAL MCDONALD: The real payoff is the saving of the lives of the soldiers and marines on the ground in South Vietnam. That's the quickest answer I can give you.

And I believe very sincerely that even though the bombing of North Vietnam hasn't completely stopped or interdicted the introduction of men and supplies into South Vietnam, there's no doubt in my mind but what by the slowdown we have saved the lives of an awful lot of soldiers and marines on the ground in South Vietnam and that, to me, fellows is the payoff.

QUESTION: You're not in favor of any pause then are you?

ADMIRAL MCDONALD: I am not.

NAME: General William C. Westmoreland, Commander, MACV
OCCASION: Interview: U.S. News and World Report
DATE: November 28, 1965

How do you assess the bombing of the North?

Our strategy consists of three parts: sustained operations against Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army main-force units in South Vietnam; support of the Government of Vietnam's nation-building process, and the bombing campaign against military targets in North Vietnam.

The latter program has been very valuable to the troops fighting in the South, and is of vital importance. As long as the leadership in Hanoi continue their aggression and support sabotage and terror, the bombing in North Vietnam of military routes, facilities, installations and resources essential to their warmaking efforts should continue. Under present circumstances, it is naive to think that we can gain an advantage by discontinuing or reducing the level of the air campaign.
Added to the weight of all the air operations I have cited are the continuing attacks on North Vietnam's petroleum stores, barracks and other military facilities, and of the key bridges and road segments which provide a link with Communist China.

The objectives of these attacks is to move the leaders of the Hanoi government toward a point where either reason or necessity or both will compel a progressive reduction in their support of aggression against South Vietnam. Again let me point out that our efforts to achieve this result are limited and controlled by our government's policy of restraint and humanitarian concern.
Q. There are wire reports from Vietnam that we bombed three targets in North Vietnam since last Friday that we had not bombed before.

Is this part of a new program that we decided upon?

SECRETARY McNAMARA. No. These targets are part of the same target system that our military efforts have been directed against for over a year, the lines of communication and the supporting facilities supporting the flow of men and materiel from North Vietnam to South Vietnam.

The targets you referred to were petroleum depots, which are the foundation of the movement of men and materiel to the south; a vehicle park, a vehicle maintenance depot, which was a storehouse for the trucks used in those movements, the Army trucks used in those movements; and railroad yards through which the materials were flowing.
It is true that infiltration from the North continues. I do not believe that an air blockade of land and sea routes will ever be completely effective any more than a sea blockade can prevent all commerce from entering or leaving a country. Our interdiction campaign can be made, and is being made, more effective each month as our intelligence, tactics, techniques and equipment are refined by constant analysis. However, the measure of its effectiveness is not so much the number of troops that can be infiltrated as it is the enemy's ability to support those troops once they have entered South Vietnam. Communist armies, like any other armies, cannot fight effectively for long without food, ammunition and replacement equipment. * * *

Our bombing of targets in North Vietnam has destroyed over two-thirds of the enemy's oil storage capacity, the bulk of his ammunition storage and explosive manufacturing facilities, and nearly all bridges outside the Hanoi and Haiphong areas. A large number of military buildings have been destroyed or damaged, as well as military facilities along the southern coast. Not all of these enemy assets are put permanently out of use. In some cases, bridges, buildings and storage facilities can be repaired or substitutes found
Q. Can you say anything about how badly North Vietnam may be hurting because of our bombing?

AMBASSADOR LODGE. Well, I think they have had a lot of roads and bridges knocked out. They have had some industrial establishments knocked out. I think they have been hurt with our bombs. I think they have been hurt by their own flak, too, with some of their own missiles that went off on the ground.

I think they have been hurt. I think the big reason for doing this—and it is a very good reason—is to keep faith with our own troops. When you have troops in combat, they have a right to expect that everything will be done to interfere with their enemy's line of communication, because if you don't interfere with the enemy's line of communication it comes right out of them.
During the last year our air campaign against North Vietnam has impeded the flow of supplies and equipment to the South. If it had not been for the effectiveness of the Air Force, Navy, Marine and VNAF [Vietnamese Air Force] strikes, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong main force troops in the South would have been better supplied with weapons and ammunition than was the case. There can be no doubt that many Vietnamese, American, Korean, Australian and New Zealand troops are alive today because of the air campaign against military targets.
QUESTION: Mr. President, what is your reaction to the reports by the New York Times from North Vietnam about the results of our bombing there?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I have followed our activity in Vietnam very closely. I think the country knows—and I would like to repeat again—that it is the policy of this Government to bomb only military targets.

We realize that when you do that, inevitably and almost invariably there are casualties, there are losses of lives.

We regret to see those losses. We do everything we can to minimize them. But they do occur in North Vietnam as they do in South Vietnam.

There are thousands of civilians who have died this year in South Vietnam as a result of detonation of grenades and bombs. And every casualty is to be regretted.

But only military targets have been authorized. And I am informed that our men who are responsible for carrying out our orders have done their very best to execute those orders as given.
QUESTION: Mr. President, in his reports from North Vietnam, Mr. Salisbury, of the Times, spoke of heavy destruction in residential areas around two light industries there, a rice mill and a textile plant. Sir, I don't believe that these industries fall within the categories of target objectives previously announced by the Defense Department. Has there been a change in tactics to include such targets or has there been some sort of mistake?

THE PRESIDENT: None whatever. There has been no change. So far as the evidence that we have at this time there has been no mistake. I can only repeat to you what I have said before, and what has been said by other departments of the Government. Our orders are to bomb only military targets. Those are the only orders we have issued. We believe that our men have carried out those orders to the very best of their ability.

There will be civilian casualties in connection with the bombing of military targets. There are civilian casualties taking place every day--some this morning--in South Vietnam. I am concerned with casualties in both South Vietnam and North Vietnam. And I wish that all of our people would be equally as concerned.

I think that the quicker we can have a peace conference, the quicker we can arrange a true cease-fire, the quicker we can stop this total war on both sides, the better off all of our people will be.

But as long as it goes on, civilians are going to be killed, casualties will occur. And I regret every single casualty in both areas.
It is generally recognized that airpower has been and will remain a vital factor in the deterrence of nuclear war. But until recently many people took it for granted that insurgency and guerrilla warfare were strictly a task for the ground forces, and that even in a Korea-type war airpower was limited to a supporting role. Perhaps one of the most important lessons to come out of the Vietnamese conflict is the demonstration that the airplane has assumed a primary role in local war and counterinsurgency.
In summarizing airpower's total contribution to our objectives in Vietnam, there are several points that I want to emphasize. One is that airpower enables us to exploit our technology and to fight on our terms in operating against widely dispersed enemy forces in a jungle environment long regarded as being most favorable for guerrilla action. It also denies the enemy the initiative once provided by his freedom to maneuver his troops into concentrations of superior strength against isolated units. Finally, and perhaps most important, there is the increasingly demoralizing effect which airpower exerts on the enemy's troops through its selective, swift and accurate application of force against vital military targets.
AIR OPERATIONS - Sorties/Missions

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: News Conference
DATE: July 11, 1966

SECRETARY McNAMARA: ...

In the month of June the number of air sorties against the line of communication in North Vietnam totalled 7,000. That was up almost seventy percent over the level of March. If they continue to expand their traffic over those lines of communications we may have to increase our air operations still further.

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Statement at the LBJ Ranch
DATE: November 5, 1966

I expect that this same trend toward stabilization will govern our air operations, and the deployments of air units to South Vietnam, and the level of our air activities. We've been flying, for example, more than 25,000 attack sorties a month. No sharp increases in that level of air activity are planned for the future.

NAME: General Creighton W. Abrams, Vice Chief of Staff, USA
OCCASION: Address: Minuteman Chapter, AUSA, Lemmister, Mass.
DATE: December 7, 1966

Since the 1st of January 1962 through the 31st of July this year, our helicopters in South Vietnam have flown 2.5 million sorties, carried 3.5 million personnel, and lifted 180,000 tons of cargo. ... For purposes of comparison -- comparing July 1966 with July 1965 -- we flew in July 1966 four times as many sorties and lifted four times as many personnel. We logged three times as many flying hours and lifted more than three times as much cargo.
AIR OPERATIONS - Sorties/Missions

NAME: Dr. Harold Brown, Secretary of the Air Force
OCCASION: Speech: The Aviation/Space Writers Association Meeting
DATE: December 8, 1966

Last year the B-52s, which began operations in June, flew some 1,000 strike sorties, an average of about 150 a month. During the first eleven months of 1966, they have flown nearly 5,000 sorties, for an average of approximately 425 a month. During the past 6 months (June through November 1966), USAF, Navy and Marine tactical aircraft flew more than 63,000 strike sorties in South Vietnam. About 40,000, or 60% were flown by USAF pilots. An additional 15,000 sorties were flown by the VNAF in this period. Our total sorties run well ahead of 1965. Total enemy casualties for the first eight months of this year exceed those of the entire year 1965.

* * *

Tactical fighters of the USAF, Navy, Marine Corps and VNAF were, by the end of 1965, flying more than 13,000 strike sorties a month in South Vietnam.
The level of our attacks on military targets in the North has increased steadily since they began in February 1965. Putting aside January 1966, when the bombing pause was in effect, the number of missions rose from 553 in February of 1966 to a high of 3,621 in September.

In comparing the increase in size and employment of the Air Force elements in the past year with that of 1965, General Momyer said that while Air Force pilots flew only 50,000 sorties against all targets in 1965, in 1966 they averaged 1,500 air sorties a week in South Vietnam and 250 missions a week against targets in North Vietnam.

(Sorties -- a flight by one aircraft attacking at least one enemy target -- are reported in the South. In the North, only missions -- one or more aircraft attacking at least one target -- are reported.)

* * *

In the air war in the North, the number of air attacks increased approximately six-fold -- to 13,000 missions -- over the preceding year.
AIR OPERATIONS - South Vietnam

NAME: Gen. Bruce K. Holloway, Vice Chief of Staff, USAF
OCCASION: Address: Luncheon Meeting of Town Hall Los Angeles, California
DATE: September 13, 1966

the effort of our B-52s. This aircraft has now shown that it can provide effective combat support against tactical targets. The huge bomb loads of the B-52s are particularly disruptive when dropped on havens of the Viet Cong -- havens which have been enjoyed for years deep within the forests of South Vietnam. These raids have destroyed storage facilities and have harassed the enemy at previously immune headquarters. Captured Viet Cong have indicated their fear of these raids and their positive effect on desertion and surrender.

* * *

DATE: October 5, 1966

During Vietnam operations from June '65 to September '66, SAC B-52's including two of my Fifteenth Air Force units, dropped more than 95,000 tons of bombs in South Vietnam. As you realize, we have restricted our area of operations to South Vietnam with the exception of a few bombing raids on the Mu Gia Pass in North Vietnam and in the DMZ.
AIR OPERATIONS - South Vietnam

NAME: Robert H. Charles, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Installations & Logistics)

OCCASION: Speech: Annual Meeting of the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce, Granite City, Illinois

DATE: November 3, 1966

with respect to South Vietnam, close air support of our ground troops has been extremely effective in spite of unusual difficulties. There is no well-defined front; on the contrary, it has a 360 degree perimeter, and the wide deployment of forces in relatively small units makes it impossible to know in advance where help will be needed. But working closely with the Army, we have developed new techniques by which we can provide a strike within 3 to 5 minutes using tactical fighters on airborne alert, or within 15 minutes when the fighters have to be scrambled from the nearest airfield. This is extremely fast reaction time. If it were not for close air support, the number of Army troops required to do the same job would be substantially higher.
Our tactical aircraft engage enemy troops in actual air-to-ground combat, often without the proximity of friendly ground forces. B-52 strategic bombers are being used for area-bombing of even the remotest enemy troop concentrations and installations, thus depriving the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regulars of any sanctuary throughout the expansive jungle.
AIR OPERATIONS - South Vietnam

NAME: General J. P. McConnell, Chief of Staff
      U.S. Air Force

OCCASION: Speech: Houston, Texas, Forum, Houston, Texas

DATE: November 29, 1966

With our B-52s, we are hitting the enemy's field headquarters, communications centers, warehouses, training centers, staging areas and truck parks. Since we began these operations in June 1965, we have flown over 5,000 sorties against these targets, releasing more than 95,000 tons of high explosives.

These B-52 operations have denied the enemy the opportunity to concentrate his forces in jungle havens that would otherwise be relatively immune from attack. As a result, U.S. and South Vietnamese troops are now able to penetrate and regain control of many areas.

We place greatest importance on the fact that, since the beginning of the B-52 strikes, the enemy has been unable to carry out successfully his monsoon offensive.
By all odds the greatest margin of increased air effort in Southeast Asia has occurred in the field of fighter operations. Since August of last year the weight of those operations has almost tripled.

In South Vietnam, we have used high-performance jet fighters, like the F-100 and F-4C, not only in close air support of friendly ground forces, but also in air-to-ground combat operations against enemy troops and facilities so remote or well-protected as to be virtually immune from attack by any military instrument other than airpower.

* * *

In South Vietnam during 1966, the Air Force's principal emphasis was toward supporting of U.S., Vietnamese and Free World ground troops in contact with the enemy. As the year drew to a close, the Air Force had built and positioned its squadrons of fighter-bombers so response to a request for immediate air support was no more than 15 minutes away.
In addition to the air strikes by the fighter-bombers, Air Force B-52 Strato-fortresses made almost daily attacks against enemy troop concentrations and supply areas in South Vietnam. The big bombers also hit communist buildup areas in and near the DMZ and the Mu Gia Pass area in North Vietnam. By the close of the year, B-52s were striking several times a day and flying in support of ground operations.

The air operation in the South grew to massive proportions as the Air Force stepped up its efforts to meet its U.S., Vietnamese and Free World Forces strike, reconnaissance and airlift requirements. In addition to the air strikes by tactical fighter-bombers and the big B-52s, the Air Force has, on a typical day, mounted 12 flare drops, 34 psychological warfare, 223 visual reconnaissance, 12 photo reconnaissance, 14 escort, 25 search and rescue, 31 combat troop airlift, 130 combat logistic airlift and 172 administrative-liaison sorties.

The FACs in South Vietnam in 1966 kept up their daily surveillance of the 66,200 square miles of South Vietnam's delta, jungle and mountains. Suspicious activity was reported through U.S. and Vietnamese elements of command to determine if that activity was hostile. If confirmed as enemy and with the approval of the Vietnamese authorities, the FACs would direct air strikes against the target.

In South Vietnam, the more than 160 search and destroy operations mounted by U.S., Vietnamese and Free World Forces received strong Air Force support.
Five members of SEATO have, or soon will have, military forces in Viet-Nam. One nation from outside SEATO, the Republic of Korea, grateful for the help it received when it was defending its own freedom against Communist aggression, has sent to Viet-Nam a full division plus a Marine brigade and a contingent of engineers, and is about to send another full division.

More than thirty nations are providing economic and humanitarian assistance to South Viet-Nam.

"The effects of our stand in Viet-Nam are being felt throughout the Far East. As I indicated one of the great problems in that part of the world is that there is now no Asian nation or group of Asian nations that either alone or in combination can provide security against China and its allies. We are providing that security and behind our screen new and constructive developments are taking place."

"Asian nations, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, New Zealand and Australia are providing troops to support the government of Viet-Nam."
Other nations have been making their contributions. Korea has just completed sending more than 44,000 of its sons to South Viet-Nam. I believe now they have a higher percentage of their total population there than we do. The Australians are well represented there. The New Zealanders and the Philippines have also dispatched some help to that area.

In recent months the leaders of all of those nations --- Thailand, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Korea --- have all come to Washington. Most of them have done in recent weeks and have exchanged views as heads of their states with the President and members of the Cabinet, and in some instances the Senators.
The 370,000 Free World Military Assistance troops in Vietnam are there to support the armed forces and the people of Vietnam in their struggle against communist aggression. The commanders and troops of the several nations are working together in coordination and harmony that is unprecedented in history. Their successes on the battlefield attest to their morale, fighting spirit, and professionalism.

NAME: General William C. Westmoreland, Commander, MACV
OCCASION: Statement at the Manila Conference
DATE: October 24, 1966 (White House Release)

Q How are our allies doing?
A Next to the U.S., the Republic of Korea has the largest force here and, in my opinion, the Koreans have done a superb job. Their troops are well-trained and well-disciplined. They have conducted themselves admirably on the battlefield. They also have been very effective in working with the Vietnamese people, and are liked by the people.

The Australians, of course, are experienced jungle fighters, having fought in Malaya and in Borneo. They are truly professional. Their officers and noncoms have learned from practical experience, and this has been transmitted to their recruits. Their discipline is remarkable, their tactics are excellent. They've displayed admirable qualities of patience on the battlefield, which is very important in this environment. And I find that the Australians also have an amazing curiosity, which stands them in good stead.

New Zealand has a battery of artillery which also has done very well, working closely with the Australians.

The Filipinos have just arrived. They have a force consisting of an engineer battalion and an infantry battalion for security and certain other attachments. I'm impressed with them so far. They're highly motivated. They're well-trained and disciplined. I'm confident they will give an excellent account of themselves.

The Thai have contributed some transport pilots and several naval vessels. They also have, and most certainly will continue, to perform creditably.
ALLIES - Assistance of

NAME: General Creighton W. Abrams, Vice Chief of Staff, USA
OCCASION: Address: Minuteman Chapter, AUSA, Leominster, Mass.
DATE: December 7, 1966

We tend to focus our attention on the United States forces and the Army forces that are in South Vietnam, but on my trip I had a chance to visit the "Tiger" Division from South Korea while I was there. This is a splendid fighting division. Those of you who have served in Korea would be proud to see this Korean Army unit -- strong, skilled, having a wonderful esprit, and doing a magnificent job in South Vietnam.

I also visited the 1st Philippine Civic Action Group, which was organized in July of this year to extend increased assistance to the Republic of Vietnam in the form of engineering, civic action and other socio-economic endeavors. This fine group of men -- all volunteers -- had only recently arrived when I visited them and were in the process of establishing their camp. They have some fine work planned to help rebuild South Vietnam and to provide medical aid to the population. My point here is that there is a significant participation by other countries, as well as our own, in assisting South Vietnam defend itself.

NAME: General Harold K. Johnson, Chief of Staff, USA
OCCASION: Honorary Degree Convocation, North Dakota State University
DATE: December 15, 1966

I can tell you that the Korean troops in Vietnam are a well-trained, hard-fighting group of soldiers; and I can also tell you that the ones I saw in Korea, back from having served in Vietnam, walked with pride and confidence. But the point I want to make is that the Korean soldier in Vietnam is one of the best evidences we have of what our Nation is trying to do. He, the Korean, is an Asian whose country was helped by us, and he can speak as one Asian to another and say in effect, "You see, America had no imperialistic designs on us. She came over to help us defeat communist aggression and then let us steer our own course."
Air ordnance inventories in Southeast Asia have continued to mount. I think I announced publicly in Mid-March they then amounted to approximately 61,000 tons. Last week, the first of July, they amounted to 91,000 tons.

* * *

I have today issued instructions to cut the planned rate of air munitions production by approximately 30 percent beginning about 90 days from now.

On an annual basis, compared with previous estimates, the new air munitions production plan will reduce expenditures by approximately $1 billion. This will be true despite the fact that we will be building to an air ordnance inventory of over 500,000 tons during the next 12 months.

These actions which we are taking today are designed to avoid wasteful accumulation of excessive inventories such as the $12 billion surplus of ammunition and equipment with which we ended the Korean War.

The revised production plan has been thoroughly studied by all officers of the Department and has the support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

I want to emphasize that planned expenditures for air munitions and planned consumption of air munitions in Southeast Asia will continue to rise during the coming months. But despite these increases, it will be possible to level off production schedules at rates almost a third below those that we had previously planned upon. And the new production schedules will insure that requirements in Vietnam and elsewhere in the world will be met while at the same time our inventories of reserve stocks will continue to grow.

Should consumption increase beyond current plans, and that is always possible, the production base can be expanded rapidly to take care of any such contingency.

American industry and American labor, I think, have done an outstanding job in responding to our military requirements. As a result, bomb production during the last month of June exceeded consumption and we think this trend will continue in future months.