SELECTED STATEMENTS ON VIETNAM
BY DoD AND OTHER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

July 1 - December 31, 1967

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

Prepared by
SAFAAR
January 11, 1967
# SELECTED STATEMENTS ON VIETNAM

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The President today signed the Presidential Unit Citation for the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and attached units. This is the first division-size unit to receive the Presidential Unit Citation in Vietnam.

The unit was cited for its actions in the Republic of Vietnam during the period October 23, 1965 to November 26, 1965. During the engagement for which they were cited, they also engaged in numerous humanitarian actions.

The President will present the award on Thursday, September 14 at the White House.

While engaged in combat, the 1st Cavalry evacuated 3,300 refugees from the battle areas, provided almost 16 tons of foodstuffs for the hungry, distributed more than 2 tons of clothing and medical supplies to the needy, provided medical treatment to some 450 Vietnamese civilians and immunized another 2,000 against disease, and contributed more than $2,600 for construction of a school and improvement of a native dispensary.

Air cavalry—with its mobility and potential for surprise on the battlefield—was a promising but untried concept, until the men of the Cavalry, in their first test of arms, proved its validity.

They proved more than a concept. To the Vietnamese people who had lived under Vietcong control for so long, their presence helped destroy the myth—which the enemy had carefully built—that the area was permanently tied to the enemy.

The war in Vietnam, as all of you know, is a new kind of conflict. American arms are being tested there by a new kind of aggression. If it should succeed, it will be used again. Of that we and the rest of the world may be sure.

In past years, our military gave us only the alternatives of permitting the enemy to have his victory undeterred, or of stopping him with a massiveness that could provoke a nuclear war.

America needed a new response to meet the new form of aggression. Great names went into the construction of that response—John F. Kennedy, Robert McNamara, Maxwell Taylor.

What the 1st Cavalry Division did in the Ia Drang Valley demonstrated that the new kind of warfare could be met and could be mastered. They dealt a hard blow to the Communist belief that freedom can be destroyed piece by piece.
AIR OPERATIONS - Air Mobility

NAME: Maj Gen John M. Wright, Jr., CG, USA Infantry Center
OCCASION: National Meeting of the Army Aviation Association
DATE: October 12, 1967

"Army airmobility has now been tested in the flame of war for over two years. The vision of the original airmobile concept has been converted to reality.

"Why has this new way of fighting been so successful? The obvious answer is that Army aviation has provided the Infantryman with a degree of mobility unimaginable only a few short years ago. However, this answer does not do full justice to the unique dynamics of the airmobility concept. The real reason is that for the first time in the history of warfare aircraft have been completely integrated as a principal component of the ground commander's plan of fire and maneuver. The Army aviator has taken his place shoulder to shoulder with the triumvirate that has ruled the battlefield through the ages -- the Infantryman, the Artilleryman and the Cavalryman. In the infantry we no longer look upon Army aviation as a supporting element. We look upon Army aviation as an integral means of fire and maneuver as indispensable as armor and artillery.

NAME: Maj Gen George P. Seneff, USA, C/G, 1st Aviation Brigade
OCCASION: Press Conference at the Pentagon
DATE: October 13, 1967

Since that time and up to the present, this aviation build up has continued, until we now have a substantial increase in companies in country. There are over 1400 aircraft presently assigned to the Brigade. Because of this rapid expansion in non-divisional aviation units, it became necessary for command and control purposes to activate the 12th Combat Aviation Group in May of 1965. Prior to this the battalion had been the largest aviation headquarters in existence in Vietnam. It then became apparent that a centralized headquarters was required for planning overall aviation matters and to give direction and guidance to the separate battalions. It should be remembered that prior to the summer of 1965 most of our aviation units operated in support of RVN ground forces. As the build-up of Free World forces began, our resources were called upon to provide them support also. As the build-up continued, another aviation group was required to control and guide aviation units in the northern half of the country. The 17th Combat Aviation Group was activated on 15 December 1965. Finally, on 1 March of last year the Aviation Brigade was activated and it presently has command of the 12th and 17th Groups.
AIR OPERATIONS - Air Mobility

NAME: Maj Gen George P. Seneff, USA, C/G, 1st Aviation Brigade
OCCASION: Press Conference at the Pentagon
DATE: October 13, 1967

From the point of vulnerability we have fared much better than many skeptics of Army Aviation a few years ago were predicting. The enemy in RVN has tried to develop effective means to impede heliborne operations. New enemy tactics require a concentrated effort on our part to learn their techniques in sufficient time to render them ineffective. Particular devices that the enemy has been using are mines and/or booby traps planted in landing zones. These devices are detonated by command signal, trip wires, and poles. To counteract this weapons system we've had to go back to a World War II device called daisy cutters. This device consists of heavy munitions fused for super-quick detonation thereby creating higher overpressure above the ground and less cratering effect. Further, better security measures have cut down losses from mines and/or booby traps in landing zones.

Of interest to many of you is the fact that we have lost only one aircraft per 25,291 sorties. While any loss is unacceptable we feel that we have suffered significantly fewer aircraft and crewmember losses than expected.

NAME: General William C. Westmoreland, Commander, MACV
OCCASION: Military Briefing at the Pentagon
DATE: November 22, 1967

One of our greatest assets, if not our greatest, is our mobility. In this war we're moving brigades around the way we moved companies in World War II. We can react very rapidly as you have seen us do from the news accounts.
AIR OPERATIONS - Losses

NAME: General Earle G. Wheeler, USA, Chairman of the JCS
OCCASION: Statement before Senate Preparedness Investigating
Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee
DATE: August 16, 1967

Aircraft loss rates have, since June 1966, remained below those of the Korean war and less than one-third of the loss rate experienced in World War II. I might point out that veterans of both World War II and Korea, who have experienced the flak around the tougher targets in North Vietnam, have stated that it far exceeds anything they have previously seen. Statistics on gun densities and rates of fire bear them out.

* * *

Recently, the trend in aircraft loss rates has improved markedly. In the first six months of 1967, for example, the loss rate in the northeast area was reduced by two-thirds, with an over four-fold increase in the number of sorties flown in this area. This results from improved tactics, better electronic countermeasures and more effective munitions, and the unremitting pressure which has been applied against North Vietnam's LOCs and defenses during the past several months.
AIR OPERATIONS - Losses

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: News Conference at the Pentagon
DATE: September 7, 1967

We find that our aircraft losses are running lower than the budgeted plan by a rather significant amount.

The same is not true of helicopters, by the way; there's an off-set there. But it is this refinement of plan throughout the Department which I think will make it possible to off-set some of the increases associated with the high rate of operations planned for Vietnam.

NAME: Lt. Gen. William W. Momyer, Commander 7th Air Force & Deputy Commander for MACV
OCCASION: News Conference in Saigon
DATE: September 19, 1967

Question -- When you started in this business, General, did you expect that the costs in U. S. aircraft would be as high -- nearly 700 planes over the North by now?

Answer -- Total loss of the aircraft, if you look at our loss rate in World War II, it ran about 9 1/2 per 1,000 sorties. In Korea it ran about 3 1/2 per 1,000 sorties. And we've been operating under 3 and in some cases it's been down as low as 1 1/2. So I think on total balance with the number of sorties that we're running and the effort that we're putting out, this isn't consistent with our previous experience. As a matter of fact, it's much more favorable than any war that we've previously fought.

Question -- You gave us the loss rate over North Vietnam, 3 per 1,000 sorties. What about the loss rate in South Vietnam?

Answer -- It's a fraction of half a percent.... Less than half an airplane per 1,000 sorties.
air losses have risen as a result of our out-of-country raids. Though the bulk of air losses in Southeast Asia have come from ground fire rather than airborne opposition, the air war has been increasing in tempo, especially our encounters with MIG aircraft. The North Vietnamese do not have an abundance of these jet fighters and are understandably reluctant to use them, but when we see them now I think that it is another indication of the success of our air war against the North -- the fact that Ho Chi Minh is driven to risk the loss of his fighter force in order to protect ground targets against continued assault.
Mr. Secretary, did you come back with judgments on the effectiveness of the air war in the north?

* * *

My impression is that it is proceeding about as we expected. There has been some misunderstanding as to what we believed would be possible by air attacks on main lines of communication in the north. We have never said that such air attacks could stop the flow of men and supplies from north to south.

That is probably beyond the capability of air, no matter how competently it may be managed and directed. We have said, and I have said, on many, many occasions that one of the three objectives of carrying out those air attacks was either to reduce the flow of supplies and/or to increase the cost of that flow.

I think we have very clearly met that objective. All of the statements that were presented to me at Saigon by CINCPAC staff showed that something on the order of 400,000 to 500,000 men had been diverted from other functions in North Vietnam to the repair of the lines of communication attacked by our planes, lines of communication that are vital and fundamental to the movement of men and material from North Vietnam to South Vietnam.

These are 400,000 or 500,000 men taken out of an economy on the margin of subsistence and it is a very heavy price that economy is paying to maintain those lines of communication.

Now the enemy has a substantial number of forces tied up in their air defense system in order to counter our air offensive actions to the north. There is a substantial number of people involved in maintaining their lines of communication.

No doubt they could send additional troops to the South and they may do so. But they will do so at great risk.

As long as we continue our air interdiction program, I believe they will be hard pressed to properly support them.
"The air war is yielding ever increasing gains. During the last three months we have wreaked greater destruction and disruption of North Vietnam's war-making capacity than in any previous period.

"We have disrupted the rail lines to Communist China frequently during this period to the extent that they must be finding it very difficult to get traffic through.

"In addition there are indications that shipping is taking longer and longer to unload at Haiphong."

* * *
It is impossible to tell when the combination of our campaign in the North and the military and nation-building programs in the South will lead the regime in Hanoi to conclude that its aggression is both unsuccessful and exceedingly costly, to the point that it is not rational to continue."

"There is no doubt in my mind that our attacks in the North are speeding the day when Hanoi will arrive at this conclusion."

As a result of the air war, "repair, reconstruction and dispersal programs are consuming increasing human and material resources which would otherwise contribute to the communists' combat capability in South Vietnam," he said. "About 500,000 men have been diverted to such activities."
the air war over North Vietnam has resulted in the destruction or disruption of approximately half that country's war-supporting industry.

Adm. US Grant Sharp, in a speech before the Honolulu Press Club, again stressed his strong support of what he termed "the mos debated and least understood aspect of the Vietnam war, our campaign against North Vietnam."

Sharp said there has been "a significant broadening of targets" in the air war because this "is the most effective means of reducing North Vietnam's support of the war in the South."
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

NAME:  Adm U.S.G. Sharp, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific

OCCASION:  Statement before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee

DATE:  August 9, 1967

Although initiated with modest efforts and slowly expanded under carefully controlled conditions, the growing weight of our efforts has brought extensive destruction or disruption of North Vietnam's war-supporting resources. Approximately half of the country's war-supporting industry has been destroyed or disrupted. Petroleum has been widely dispersed in a costly and inefficient small container storage system. The bulk of primary electric power capacity has been destroyed, with adverse effect on the chemical, rubber and other power-dependent industries. The country's only iron and steel plant and its single cement plant have been put out of operation. Many of the country's military complexes have been attacked. Strikes on road, rail, and water routes have taken a heavy toll of trucks, rolling stock, boats, and barges, a portion of which have not been replaced. Bombing of the rail lines and truck routes has significantly interdicted traffic and forced a major repair and reconstruction effort. Hundreds of enemy waterborne logistic craft have been destroyed or damaged by bombs and naval gunfire.

The campaign has curtailed the infiltration of men and material into South Vietnam. A complete stoppage of infiltration was never anticipated. However, we have reduced the level of infiltration, especially of material, well below that which would be possible if traffic were left unimpeded. This has served to limit considerably the enemy's ability to conduct major, sustained operations in South Vietnam. We continue to seek improved means of interdicting enemy forces and supplies in this area.

As a result of the increased weight and efficiency of our attacks, the Hanoi Regime faces mounting logistic, management, and morale problems. Repair, reconstruction, and dispersal programs are consuming increasing human and material resources which otherwise would contribute to the communist's combat capability in South Vietnam. We believe about 500,000 men have been diverted to such activities. The extensive defense programs are heavy users of manpower. The drawdown on farm labor has reduced food production, and large amounts of food now have to be imported. The ports are congested by an almost four-fold expansion of sea imports necessitated by disruption or destruction of domestic sources of cement, steel, and other bulky materials. Ship unloading time is believed to have tripled since March.
In my judgment, the air campaign is going well. Our forces have been able to achieve a level of effort not previously possible. The volume of SAM and AAA fire fluctuates, indicating possible difficulties in ammunition distribution and resupply. There have been fewer MIG engagements, although there are some recent indications that these may be on the rise again.

Strikes during the current good weather period -- as compared to the preceding bad weather months -- have more than doubled the destruction of trucks and of waterborne logistic craft. The destruction and damage to railroad rolling stock have increased markedly and all northern railroad lines have been subjected to intensified interdiction which has resulted in frequent closures to through traffic and in an increasing requirement for shuttling. All of this has been accomplished with a marked decline in aircraft loss rates, despite greatly increasing the sorties flown into heavily defended areas of North Vietnam.

Additionally,

--- For over a year, the enemy has been beaten every time he has taken a major initiative against our forces in South Vietnam, and his organized large-scale military initiatives have continued at a low level.

(contd)
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

General Wheeler (Contd)

--- Life and economy in North Vietnam has been disrupted.

--- Major North Vietnamese manpower resources have been diverted to defend against and accommodate to air strikes.

--- North Vietnam's demands upon communist nations for war materiel have increased substantially; and, at the same time, its ability to provide reimbursement has decreased.

Although precise measurement of the contributions of the air campaign to these overall results is not possible, it is my judgment that they have been substantial.

NAME: General Earle G. Wheeler, USA, Chairman of the JCS

OCCASION: Statement before Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee

DATE: August 16, 1967

--- First, the bombing of North Vietnam is an integral and indispensable part of our overall strategy in Southeast Asia.

--- Second, I believe the air campaign against North Vietnam is achieving its objectives and is saving American and Allied lives in South Vietnam.
In summary, without the air war in the North, our forces in the South could have been faced with an entirely different situation. In my opinion, the enemy could be operating with many well equipped major combat units; our ground forces could have suffered many more casualties; our manpower and logistic costs could be significantly greater than they are today; and we could be committed to a policy of fighting a defensive war in the South. The air war in the North is the offensive half of our strategy, with the initiative controlled by the United States, and not the enemy. Airpower, in affording this advantage, exerts the influence that is most likely to force the enemy to reconsider his avowed hard line.

In my opinion, if the air campaign in the North had not been initiated, the scope of the ground war in South Vietnam might well have been greatly expanded. The enemy could have infiltrated more armed troops into South Vietnam; he could have been supported by larger quantities of war supplies; and we would have suffered many more casualties on the battlefield. Also, the air campaign in the North has ensured the permissive air environment that allows our ground forces in South Vietnam to maneuver with complete freedom from enemy air attack.
General John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff, USAF

Statement before the Senate Armed Services
Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee

August 22, 1967

A further increase in North Vietnam logistic support activity during the 1967 "TET" standoff has clearly indicated the air campaign's impact on supply lines to South Vietnam. During that four-day lapse in attack sorties, North Vietnam pushed through a volume of supplies that would have required at least 38 days to move during periods of our air activity. The amount of effort, planning and coordination necessary to mass the transportation and equipment for this one-time move was prodigious. It provides some indication of the effort North Vietnam is willing to expend to avoid exposing its transportation resources and combat supplies to air interdiction.

Another result of our air operations in North Vietnam is the diversion of over 500,000 full-time and part-time workers to war-related activities such as LOC repair and civil defense.

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of Naval Operations

Statement before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee

August 23, 1967

IN MY OPINION, OUR AIR EFFORT AGAINST NORTH VIET NAM IS MAKING A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR OBJECTIVES IN SOUTH VIET NAM. NOW IS CERTAINLY NOT THE TIME TO TERMINATE, OR DECREASE IN ANY WAY, THIS PRESSURE ON THE ENEMY.
It could be argued that a greatly expanded and virtually unrestricted bombing effort might substantially reduce the movement of forces and supplies through North Vietnam into SVN, even though NVN resolve remains unshaken. Recent prisoner interrogations suggest that 10-20% of the personnel dispatched to the South by the rulers of NVN never reach the battle area -- about 2% are casualties caused by air attacks. A much higher percentage of the supplies sent South to support the DRV fighting forces are destroyed in transit by our armed reconnaissance and heavy bombing attacks. Conceivably an all-out air and naval bombardment might somewhat further increase the forces and supplies destroyed. But the capacity of the lines of communication and of the outside sources of supply so far exceed the minimal flow necessary to support the present level of North Vietnamese military effort in SVN that the enemy operations in the South cannot, on the basis of any reports I have seen, be stopped by air bombardment -- short, that is, of the virtual annihilation of North Vietnam and its people. As General Wheeler has observed, no one has proposed such indiscriminate bombing of populated areas.
Air strikes are reported to have destroyed over 4,100 vehicles, 7,400 water-craft and 1,400 pieces of RR rolling stock. In addition, we have struck approximately 1,900 fixed targets in North Vietnam, including 57 bridges, 50 major rail yards, troop barracks, petroleum storage tanks and power plants.

NVN has been forced to divert an estimated 300,000 full-time and at least an equal number of part-time workers and troops, to the repair, dispersal, and defense of the lines of communication and other targets which have been damaged. This diversion of some 500,000 people in a society already strained to maintain a marginal subsistence is a severe penalty.

* * *

Weighed against its stated objectives, the bombing campaign has been successful. It was initiated at a time when the South Vietnamese were in fear of a military defeat. There can be no question that the bombing raised and sustained the morale of the South Vietnamese. It should be equally clear to the North Vietnamese that they have paid and will continue to pay a high price for their continued aggression. We have also made the infiltration of men and supplies from North Vietnam to South Vietnam increasingly difficult and costly.

Complete interdiction of these supplies has never been considered possible by our military leaders.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Statement before the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee
DATE: August 25, 1967

As to breaking their will, I have seen no evidence in any of the many intelligence reports that would lead me to believe that a less selective bombing campaign would change the resolve of NVN's leaders or deprive them of the support of the North Vietnamese people.

* * *

There is also nothing in the past reaction of the North Vietnamese leaders that would provide any confidence that they can be bombed to the negotiating table. Their regard for the comfort and even the lives of the people they control does not seem to be sufficiently high to lead them to bargain for settlement in order to stop a heightened level of attack.

The course of conflict on the ground in the South, rather than the scale of air attack in the North appears to be the determining factor in NVN's willingness to continue.

Accordingly, as General Wheeler has pointed out, the air campaign in the North and our military efforts in the South are not separate wars and certainly they should not be regarded as alternatives.
MR. EVANS: Mr. Secretary, General McConnell, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, told Congress that in his view 800,000 additional U.S. troops would have to have been sent to South Vietnam to fight in a ground war had it not been for the bombing.

Two days later Secretary of Defense McNamara said in his view the bombing had not cut -- it had made more difficult but had not probably reduced the infiltration of manpower. Who is right?

MR. BUNDY: Those are two judgments on a matter nobody can resolve, Mr. Evans. We don't know whether they would have sent a lot more down without the bombing. We do have indications, but they are certainly not conclusive. For example, we have a high level North Vietnamese leader who said that they weren't getting all the stuff they needed in the area just north of the DMZ, and in the south, but you can't be positive of it. I, myself, am inclined to think that they would have sent substantially more without the bombing.

MR. EVANS: You don't agree with Mr. McNamara on that point?

MR. BUNDY: He was talking capabilities and he was talking present levels. He didn't get into the question -- which nobody can answer -- on what would Hanoi have done without the bombing.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

NAME: General Harold K. Johnson, Chief of Staff, USA
OCCASION: Statement before the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, Committee on Armed Services, US Senate
DATE: August 28, 1967

Within the military share of the total effort, the results of the air campaign against North Vietnam have an effect on military operations in South Vietnam.

The air campaign against the North causes a deterioration in the enemy's total military environment which reduces his ability to support the war in the South. As this reduction is achieved, enemy forces in the South suffer, and friendly forces are benefitted.
First, the air campaign is making it more difficult for the North Vietnamese to support enemy forces in the South. They have had to divert an estimated 500,000 to 600,000 personnel to full and part-time war-related tasks to counteract the effects of the air campaign. These individuals represent a work effort and, perhaps more significantly, management and technical skills that might otherwise be more directly engaged in support of activities in the South. The high level of attacks since the advent of good weather in April, particularly against the lines of communication in the northeast quadrant, has resulted in a major increase in the level of damage inflicted. Although trucks, rail cars, and equipment are replaceable, and bridges and rail lines repairable, valuable North Vietnamese resources must be diverted to accomplish this repair and replacement. Thus, these resources are unavailable for commitment to South Vietnam.

Second, the air campaign is exacting a cost from North Vietnam for her aggression. In this regard we have also achieved some success. All or substantial segments of the militarily important elements of North Vietnam's limited industrial base have been destroyed; for example, her explosives, pig iron, and cement production facilities as well as her thermal power plants have suffered major damage.

In summary, I believe that air attacks in the North have contributed significantly to the success we have achieved thus far in South Vietnam. Although the air campaign in the North cannot by itself achieve our objectives in the South, it is an essential complement of the total military effort in Southeast Asia.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

NAME: General Wallace M. Greené, Jr., Commandant, USMC
OCCASION: 49th Annual Convention of the American Legion
DATE: August 30, 1967

What would they have us do, "Stop the bombing?"

Must we create a sanctuary? Then place our troops right on the front doorstep; come within range of every one of the enemy's weapons; absorb all the punishment he can deliver; and not strike back?

"Oh no. We don't mean that," they'll say. "Just stop the bombing and Ho Chi Minh will stop the war."

Well, I say, tell that to the Marines! You might find those bearing the scars of 140 millimeter rocket fire are just a bit tired of turning the other cheek?

And to those who claim the bombing is not effective, that its cost is too great for the results achieved, I have two questions:

"What would the enemy strength be in South Vietnam, had we not carried on the air offensive against his sanctuary?"

"Does Ho Chi Minh think he's being hurt by the bombing?"

Legionnaires, I said I came here to ask for help. I ask that my Marines, and all the other men fighting this war for us, not be denied their principal means of striking the enemy sanctuary.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

NAME:  General John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff, USAF
OCCASION:  Kelly AFB's Golden Anniversary
DATE:  September 6, 1967

If it had not been for the effective employment of airpower in North Vietnam, the ground war in South Vietnam might have been greatly expanded. This would have meant a vast increase in our ground force commitments, far greater battlefield casualties and billions of dollars of added expense.

* * *

Perhaps the most significant effect of our bombing campaign is the message that it should convey to the populace of North Vietnam and to the leaders of the Hanoi government. This message should tell them that the tactic of infiltration is producing diminishing returns in relation to cost. It should tell them that their persistence in aggression against their neighbor imposes a prohibitive drain on their military assets and on their economy. Most important of all, it should tell them that we have the controlling instrument of military power which they can only challenge but no longer successfully oppose.
NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense  
OCCASION: News Conference at the Pentagon  
DATE: September 7, 1967  

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, last night General McConnell in a speech made the following statement. He said, if it had not been for the effective employment of air power in North Vietnam the ground war in South Vietnam might have been greatly expanded.

This would have meant vast increases in our ground force commitments for greater battlefield casualties and billions of dollars of added expense.

My question is, do you see a correlation between the number of men needed in the south and the bombing in the north?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I don't think it is possible to correlate the number in the south and the bombing in the north. As a matter of fact, I think the Chiefs in talking before the Congress and some of the Commanders as well, I believe General Momoyer, for example, indicated that he was not prepared to say that additional bombing in the north could be substituted for military personnel in the south.
"Here I think one must consider the bombing of the North and the extent to which their internal supply system up there has been disrupted, and the effort that the Communists must devote just to supplying their people in North Vietnam, in addition to supplying the forces in the South. You get a variety of estimates. They run anywhere from 300,000 people to as high as 600,000 people working to keep the supplies moving. Even this may be understated when you consider the methods by which they must move these supplies and the attacks to which they are subjected. Yes, I think they are suffering a strain.

"The estimates of the number of casualties, direct and indirect, that the North Vietnamese troops suffer moving into South Vietnam are hard to pin down, but they vary from 5 to 15 percent, and some speculations are even higher than that. This is a combination of the people who are actually killed or wounded en route. There are more who don't get regular meals and begin to suffer from malnutrition and then, as a consequence, get dysentery. And a pretty high percentage of them apparently get malaria. Malaria by its very nature is a recurrent thing. This is something that they won't throw off after they get down South."

If it had not been for the effective employment of airpower in North Vietnam, the ground war in South Vietnam might have been greatly expanded. This would have meant a vast increase in our ground force commitments, far greater battlefield casualties and billions of dollars of added expense.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

NAME: General John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff, USAF
OCCASION: Address before the Annual Convention Banquet, Royal
        Canadian Air Force Association, Montreal
DATE: October 7, 1967

Our interdiction campaign against transportation routes
through North Vietnam and the so-called Demilitarized Zone has
proved its effectiveness by one of the most reliable of all
standards--its effect on the enemy's tactics. I am referring
here to his discontinuance of large-scale military campaigns
deep within the interior of South Vietnam and to his
concentration of attacks along the southern portion of the
Demilitarized Zone which greatly shorten his lines of
communication. This clearly indicates that the enemy's rate
of infiltration has been held far below the level which he
had planned or could otherwise have achieved.

This result has undoubtedly been brought about in large
part by our increasingly effective attacks against the enemy's
rolling stock, including both trucks and rail transport, as
well as against bridges and roads. We have indications that
a large segment of his population - well over a quarter of a
million - is being tied up in repair work to keep his logistic
system in operation. Another three hundred thousand are
estimated to be committed to air defense. Altogether, our
air strikes thus are preventing over half a million people
from contributing to the Communist forces in the ground battle.

(contd)
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

Gen. McConnell (contd)

This fact, coupled with the limits which the air campaign in the North has placed on the infiltration of men and supplies into South Vietnam, permits the conclusion that, if it had not been for the effective employment of airpower in North Vietnam, the ground war in South Vietnam might have been greatly expanded. This could have meant a substantial increase in our ground force commitments, far greater battlefield casualties and much added expense.

NAME: Vice President Hubert Humphrey
OCCASION: Grocery Manufacturers of America, Inc., New York
DATE: November 13, 1967

What about the bombing? This is a question regularly asked here at home, but almost never in Vietnam.

I visited our troops near the Demilitarized Zone. They told me that bombing was the single greatest factor enabling them to hold off the three North Vietnamese divisions now deployed in and behind the DMZ. I talked with our pilots. I also reviewed photos and charts which indicate that our bombing further North is not only accurate, but that it has drastically slowed down the flow of Communist men and supplies in South Vietnam ... and diverts hundreds of thousands of North Vietnamese to reconstruction and repair of facilities that support the aggression.

If you have questions about the bombing, I suggest you ask any of the American boys dug in under artillery fire along the DMZ. I suggest you ask our troops in the Central Highlands and the Delta who face mortars and guns carried in from the North.
NAME: General William C. Westmoreland, Commander, MACV
OCCASION: Interview: "Meet the Press" (NBC - Radio, TV)
DATE: November 19, 1967

MR. SPIVAK: General Westmoreland, may I ask you a question? The Washington Daily News quotes you as saying yesterday "The best way to prolong the war is to stop the bombing."

Now, that is contrary to what many world leaders believe. Will you tell us on what you base that belief?

GENERAL WESTMORELAND: Well, it is my opinion that the leadership in Hanoi can stop the war at any time they choose.

On the contrary, they have stated the avowed policy that they want to prolong the war. Now, one of the best ways I know of prolonging the war or permitting them to have the strength to prolong the war is to stop the bombing without any reciprocal action on their part.

MR. SPIVAK: Do I understand you to say then that the bombing may, if anything, hasten peace negotiations?

GENERAL WESTMORELAND: In my opinion the bombing has hurt the enemy very much. It has hurt the enemy, particularly since we stepped it up about the first of this year. It served to tie down a great number of men to provide an air defense system against this bombing campaign. We estimate 175,000, many of these skilled technicians. They have been forced to tie down about a half a million men to keep their transportation system operative. It has retarded infiltration of men, equipment and supplies and it has destroyed a great deal of ammunition that would otherwise be used against our troops. So in my opinion to stop the bombing would create additional casualties in our ranks, which I am sure nobody wants.
It is obvious that we have not and probably cannot stop North Vietnam from moving men and supplies into the south. To repeat, we never expected that the bombing would achieve this. However, in my judgment our air campaign has hurt North Vietnam seriously.

We do not really know how successful we have been in limiting the flow of men and supplies to the south, because we do not know whether the present level of communist effort in the south is what they consider their optimum or whether it is the best they can, or are willing to, mount in the face of the bombing. I reckon the latter to be the truth. Of one thing I am certain: if I were General Giap, I would want my forces in South Vietnam to be far larger, more active, and more effective than they are. And I'd be lying awake nights trying to figure out how to increase their size and effectiveness.

This much we do know.

If we stop the bombing:

The North Vietnamese would be able to put men and supplies into the south at lower costs.

The material resources available to them would be increased, would be increased, which would enable them to support more men in combat in the south or make life in the north easier, or both.

It would be a lot easier for them to prolong the war in hopes of a change in U. S. policy.

Therefore, we cannot stop the bombing of North Vietnam until we have some indication -- some decent hope -- that the other side intends to move toward peace, rather than merely to conduct the war on more advantageous terms.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Effectiveness)

NAME: General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
OCCASION: Address before the Economic Club of Detroit
DATE: December 18, 1967

The bombing has been achieving the limited purposes it was designed for.

The bombing has denied North Vietnam a sanctuary.

The bombing is exacting a heavy penalty against North Vietnam’s already strained human and materiel resources.

Bombing has increased substantially the number of men and tons which must be dispatched from the north to get one man or one ton into South Vietnam. It has apparently caused them to resort to the shorter supply routes across the DMZ and contributed to their reduction of major-scale operations within South Vietnam.

Yet, despite this demonstrable impact, some persist in arguing that the bombing is irrelevant or inconsequential!
I especially want to tell you of the very great importance of what all of you are doing to shorten the war.

In the history of air power, no such difficult set of tasks has ever been assigned as those assigned to you and those assigned to your comrades in the Army, the Navy and the Marines. Guerrilla combat provides no easy targets. That is why aggressors -- here as elsewhere -- have been tempted to choose guerrilla tactics as the means of their aggression. Yet here, for the first time, air power is actually depriving the aggressor of his advantage.

Through the use of air power, a mere handful of you men -- as military forces are really reckoned -- are pinning down several hundred thousand -- more than half a million -- North Vietnamese. You are increasing the cost of infiltration. You are imposing a very high rate of attrition when the enemy is engaged -- and you are giving him no rest when he withdraws. Air power is providing the mobility which meets and matches the stealth of an enemy whose tactics are based on sudden, hit-and-run attacks.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Objectives)

NAME: General Earle G. Wheeler, USA, Chairman of the JCS
OCCASION: Statement before Senate Preparedness Investigating
Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee
DATE: August 16, 1967

The major objectives of our air campaign have been consistent with
our overall objectives. From the start, we have sought to obstruct,
reduce, and harass the flow of war-supporting materiel within North
Vietnam, and from North Vietnam to South Vietnam; and to destroy the
war-supporting facilities of the enemy. Additionally, we have sought
to make clear to the leaders of North Vietnam that they will continue to
pay a heavy price so long as they carry on their aggression against the
South.
As I have stated many times:

- Our primary objective was to reduce the flow and/or to increase the cost of the continued infiltration of men and supplies from North to South Vietnam.
- It was also anticipated that these air operations would raise the morale of the South Vietnamese people who, at the time the bombing started, were under severe military pressure.
- Finally, we hoped to make clear to the North Vietnamese leadership that so long as they continued their aggression against the South they would have to pay a price in the North.

The bombing of North Vietnam has always been considered a supplement to and not a substitute for an effective counter-insurgency campaign in South Vietnam.

These were our objectives when our bombing program was initiated in February of 1965. They remain our objectives today.
In the north, our air losses per sortie have dropped -- and, in fact, never reached the levels which prudent planning forecast. Our targeting in the north is better and there is better cohesiveness to our air campaign. Air tactics have improved -- the result of experience and the application of improved weapons in this limited, carefully controlled conflict. These factors have permitted us to inflict heavy losses and severe destruction on the enemy.

At the same time, much remains to be done, particularly in the important northeast sector. This is their main base area for the war in the south. It contains many fixed and transitory targets that have not been struck. Here, key elements of the transportation system, industrial facilities and important military complexes continue to function in support of the aggression. Large quantities of supplies and war material from external sources are moving into and through this area. These movements generate lucrative targets requiring continued restrike to curtail their onward movement. This material is stored in and immediately adjacent to Hanoi and Haiphong, where it is moved out under cover of darkness and bad flying weather. An extensive and continued effort is required to locate and destroy it as it moves southward.

* * *

During the last three months, with an expanded target list but no significant departure from the broad restraints under which we have long operated, we have begun to hurt the enemy in his home territory. He is suffering painful military, economic, and psychological strains. Now, when the enemy is hurting, we should increase our pressures. The best way to persuade the ruling element in North Vietnam to stop the aggression is to counter that aggression in both North and South Vietnam to make the consequences of not stopping readily and painfully apparent.

In terms of targets there still are untouched targets in the North, none of them vital targets in a sense that any one will contribute in any dramatic way. But there are other targets which have not been struck.
With the exception of the three major ports of North Vietnam, targets along the Chinese border, and targets located in heavily populated areas, the majority of known military fixed targets in North Vietnam have been struck. Specific areas have been established around Hanoi and Haiphong, generally restricting armed reconnaissance missions. However, many fixed targets located in these areas have been hit, as have certain targets near the Chinese border.

This is not to say that once targets are hit, they can be crossed off the list and forgotten. North Vietnam has shown marked ability to recuperate from and accommodate to our air attacks. Major bridges which have been destroyed have been rapidly replaced by other bridges, fords, or ferries -- sometimes by all three. Thermal power plants have been put back into operation expeditiously, and roads and railroads have been rapidly repaired. Thus, the effort is a continuing one, and I do not foresee any shortage of worthwhile military targets as long as North Vietnam continues to be the source of manpower and the transmission center of supplies for the VC/NVA in the South.

As you know, strikes against the major port areas are currently prohibited. It is true that these major port areas -- particularly Haiphong -- are valuable targets. However, these ports -- and specifi-
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Targeting)

General Wheeler (Continued)

cally the shipping therein -- provide the greatest opportunity for inci-
dents which could lead to further expansion of the roles of the commun-
ist nations in the war.

Pertinent to this current restriction is the fact that, on two occasions,
our air strikes on targets near the harbor areas have accidentally damaged
Soviet shipping. Of course, our pilots strive to avoid such incidents and,
in my opinion, have done extremely well under difficult circumstances.

NAME: President Lyndon B. Johnson
OCCASION: News Conference at the White House
DATE: August 18, 1967

NEW BOMBING TARGETS NOT A THREAT TO CHINA

Q. It will come as no surprise to you, sir, that there are
a number of critics of your Vietnam policy inside and out-
side the press. But the Minneapolis Tribune, for example,
has, in the past, rather consistently supported your objec-
tives and policies in Vietnam.

But on Tuesday of this week, its lead editorial calls
your permission to bomb within 10 miles of China a dan-
gerous escalation of the bombing which could lead to
war with China.

What would your counsel be to this implied anxiety?
The President. First I would like to make it clear
that these air strikes are not intended as any threat to
Communist China. They do not, in fact, pose any threat
to that country. We believe that Peking knows that the
United States does not seek to widen the war in Vietnam.

The evidence has been quite clear that the strikes were
made against the major military staging areas and lines
of communication where the enemy has been concentrat-
ing his supplies and troops. The transportation routes
and bridges over which those troops have been moved
against our men have been hit.

We think that these targets are directly related to the
enemy's capacity to move material into South Vietnam
to kill American boys. (contd)
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Targeting)

President Johnson (Continued)

The targets to us were clearly identifiable. They were carefully selected. They were all within North Vietnam. The strikes were made by the most highly trained pilots we have. They employed every human and every technical precaution to insure that the ordnance fell on target. It did.

While everyone is entitled to his opinion—a good many of them express it—the tougher the going gets, the more difficult it will be for some to stay with us and go all the way, and last it out.

Nevertheless, we believe that if we are going to be there, it is essential to do everything we can to protect the men we have there.

We are going to try to provide the maximum deterrent at the minimum loss.

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

OCCASION: Statement before the Senate Armed Services Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee

DATE: August 22, 1967

Although we are now striking the enemy’s war-supporting resources systematically and effectively, there are valuable targets remaining unstruck. These targets have been carefully identified and added to the target list as old targets are knocked out. This addition will maintain the pressure on the enemy and will capitalize on the damage and problems already created. Also, as a continuing requirement, there are numerous interdiction points and other targets which must be kept under constant surveillance and periodically restruck.
"... The original concept of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was to go in there with a very severe application of airpower. In fact our first target list was 94 targets which we intended to destroy in a total of 16 days. That process was disapproved.... It was the 2d of March 1965, and we recommended what we called a sharp sudden blow which would have in our opinion done much to paralyze the enemy’s capability to move his equipment around and to supply people in the South. That was disapproved as a concept.

"Since that time the Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended continually increasing air operations against the enemy in North Vietnam. Those have not been approved as rapidly as we would have liked them to be. In other words, our weight of effort did not increase as rapidly as we would have liked, so we have then supported the gradual increase which has been approved."
A selective, carefully targeted bombing campaign, such as we are presently conducting, can be directed toward reasonable and realizable goals. This discriminating use of air power can and does render the infiltration of men and supplies more difficult and more costly. At the same time, it demonstrates to both South and North Vietnam our resolve to see that aggression does not succeed. A less discriminating bombing campaign against NVN would, in my opinion, do no more. We have no reason to believe that it would break the will of the North Vietnamese people or sway the purpose of their leaders. If it does not lead to such a change of mind, bombing the North at any level of intensity would not meet our objective. We would still have to prove by ground operations in the South that Hanoi's aggression could not succeed. Nor would a decision to close Haiphong, Hon Gai and Cam Pha, by whatever means, prevent the movement in and through NVN of the essentials to continue their present level of military activity in SVN.

The conclusive answer to any charge that we are inhibiting the use of our air power against targets of military significance lies in the facts. As I have noted, strikes have been authorized against 85% (302 of 359) of the targets recommended by the Joint Chiefs. And the total number of fixed targets struck in North Vietnam stands now at about 1900. As further targets are authorized and additional targets are found to be of military importance, this number will increase. But the decisions to authorize new targets cannot be expected to gain different objectives than those toward which our air campaign has always been directed.
There can be no question that bombing the ports and mining the harbors, particularly at Haiphong, would interfere seriously with NVN’s imports of war-supporting materials. But far less than the present volume of imports would provide the essentials for continued North Vietnamese military operations against SVN. As I have mentioned, it is estimated that the total tonnage required is less than 100 tons per day of non-food supplies. This is dwarfed by North Vietnam’s actual imports of about 5600 tons per day. And its import capacity is much greater. The ports together with the roads and railroads from China have an estimated capacity of about 14,000 tons a day.

* * *

If the other ports were to be closed, and on the unrealistic assumption that closing the ports would eliminate all sea-borne imports, North Vietnam would still be able to import over 8400 tons a day by rail, road and waterway. And even if, through air strikes, its road, rail and Red River waterway capacity could all be reduced by 50 per cent, North Vietnam could maintain roughly 70 per cent of its current imports. Since the daily importation of military and war-supporting material totals far less than this, it seems obvious that cutting off sea-borne imports would not prevent North Vietnam from continuing its present level of military operations in the South.
AIR OPERATIONS - NVN (Targeting)

NAME: William P. Bundy, Asst Sec of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs
OCCASION: NBC "Meet the Press"
DATE: August 27, 1967

MR. SPIVAK: Why is it then that we have only recently attacked so close to the border? Why haven't we done it in the two years that we have been bombing?

MR. BUNDY: Two reasons. First, that the military payoff, the gain in knocking out rolling stock and assembled supplies was getting steadily greater as they concentrated and bunched up for this sprinting-down process that I have spoken of on the northeast rail line and, secondly, that we have become progressively more confident with the experience of our pilots and other elements that have come into the picture, that we could do the precise job that we set out to do and this we seem to have done.

NAME: General Wallace M. Greene, Commandant, USMC
OCCASION: Statement before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee
DATE: August 28, 1967

As you well know, I have long been an advocate of a stronger air campaign against NVN, and I remain convinced that such must be a necessary part of our strategy. Since Admiral Sharp and General Wheeler have covered that strategy and the relationship of the air campaign to it, I won't go over it again. I would emphasize, that in my view, we must make it as difficult and costly as we can for Hanoi to support the war. Of prime importance in accomplishing this task is reducing to the minimum their importation of war supporting material. We must do all we can (contd)
regardless of its source. We should do everything possible -- indeed we have the responsibility -- to provide our forces with the support they require.

NAME: President Lyndon B. Johnson
OCCASION: News Conference
DATE: September 1, 1967

VIEWS OF GEN. WALLACE M. GREENE, JR., ON THE BOMBING

Q. Mr. President, was General Greene speaking strictly in accordance with the administration's policy when he said there were more important targets for bombing?

THE PRESIDENT. General Greene speaks as Commandant of the Marine Corps. He doesn't clear his speeches here. None of the Chiefs of Staff clear them here.

The provision of the Security Act says that "no provision of this Act shall be construed as to prevent a Secretary of a military department or a member of the Joint Chiefs from presenting to the Congress on his own initiative or to inform the Secretary of any recommendation relating to the Department of Defense that he may deem proper."

So the Secretaries of the Departments—Army, Navy and Air—and the Chiefs of Staffs of those Departments, express their opinion from time to time. They can do so without any approval from here, and they do.