

# Political, Military Leverage At Stake As The Bombing Continues

An AP News Analysis  
By GEORGE ESPER  
Associated Press Writer  
SAIGON (AP) — While the Indochina peace talks appear headed for a critical showdown in Paris, U.S. bombers are heavily

attacking North Vietnam both for political and military leverage. U.S. officials claim the accelerated attacks in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam are in response to a substantial effort by Hanoi to resupply its 14

divisions in South Vietnam and other units in the Plain of Jars in northern Laos before a ceasefire.

These officials also concede that the bombing is a signal from President Nixon to Hanoi that

the United States will not quit until an agreement is concluded, although Nixon has halted attacks above the 20th Parallel. This puts Hanoi and the major port of Haiphong off-limits for U.S. planes.

While the cessation of bombing in the northern Hanoi-Haiphong complex was explained as a sign of goodwill, it cost Nixon little. The northeast monsoons now prevailing there would have cut tactical air strikes anyhow and B52 strategic bombers were used rarely that far north.

Instead, raids by tactical fighter-bombers were intensified below the 20th Parallel, where all supplies must pass. And when the northeast monsoons began cutting into these strikes nearly two weeks ago, the United States doubled its B52 raids over the North to compensate.

The B52 carries 30 tons of bombs — several times the bomb load of tactical aircraft. The B52s fly at altitudes of up to 35,000 feet, above the overcasts, drop their bombs by radar, and are better suited to saturation type targets.

U.S. officials say Hanoi's supply drive is seasonal, something that always happens this time of

year when the southwest monsoons end over Laos and the northeast monsoons begin.

But the North Vietnamese invasion across the demilitarized zone last March, which gobbled up large chunks of South Vietnam's northern frontier, added a new element.

It gave Hanoi a new supply route straight across the DMZ in addition to the traditional Ho Chi Minh network through eastern Laos, which in the past has carried the bulk of North Vietnamese war material moving into South Vietnam.

U.S. officials say thus far there has been no significant push of war material down the 250-mile Ho Chi Minh trail because it is late in drying out this year. They report that the trail is being readied and there is substantial movement of supplies through the southern panhandle of North Vietnam for stockpiling at major passes leading into Laos.

At present, most of the U.S. air attacks are being concentrated on the North Vietnamese side of the border, with heavy raids around the Barthelemy Pass. This is the main supply gateway into northern Laos. The Mu Gia and Ban Karai passes are the main entry points to the Ho Chi Minh trail.

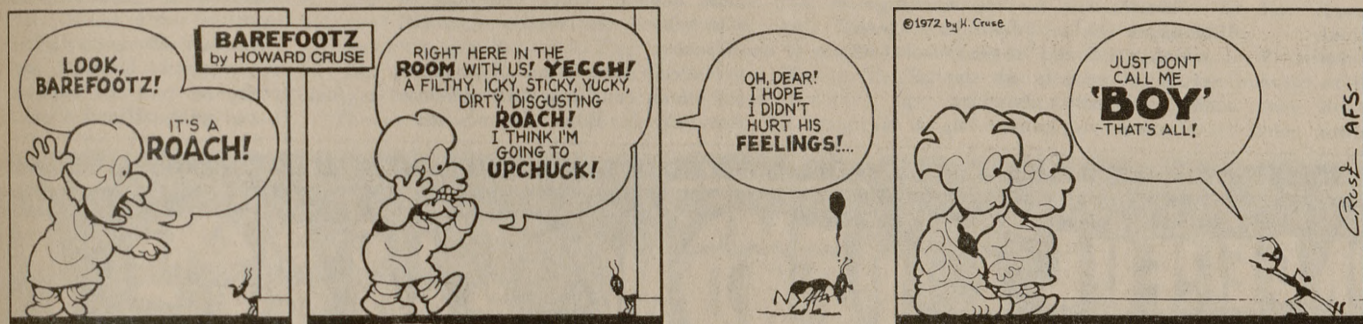
Other American air attacks are being concentrated around the North Vietnamese ports of Thanh Hoa, Vinh and Dong Hoi, in efforts to blunt the movement of supplies straight southward across the DMZ.

The saturation strikes by the B52 bombers are aimed at destroying stockpiles before they can be moved, and at causing landslides around the main passes to block them.

Officials say it is better to attack on the North Vietnamese side of the border because there are fewer roadways over which supplies move, while the Ho Chi Minh network is a series of trails, dirt roads and river crossings that stretch at least 30 miles wide. This makes bombings much more difficult. It is estimated there are between 1,250 and 1,700 places on the trail for use as storage areas.

One reason the North Vietnamese may be anxious to resupply their troops in South Vietnam now is that the draft peace proposal worked out between Hanoi and Washington in Paris last month makes no provisions for their withdrawal from the South.

South Vietnam has insisted that all North Vietnamese troops must be withdrawn from the South before a peace treaty can be concluded. Hanoi has resisted writing such a provision into the draft agreement.



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## Linguistics 205 A Success, To Be Repeated In Spring

An undergraduate course taught by three department heads, two section heads and senior scholars including the recipient of a Faculty Distinguished Achievement Award in Research will be offered again this spring at A&M. Language and communications (Linguistics 205) met considerable success this semester, the first time it was instructed, according to Dr. Harrison E. Hieth, English Department head.

"The success of the course, as measured by enrollment and genuine student participation, contributed to the team's decision to offer Linguistics 205 every semester. The spring course coordinator, visiting professor Dr. Helmut Esau noted Linguistics 205 is not listed in the undergraduate bulletin.

Instructors are Esau; Dr. Jack Dabbs, modern languages head; C. J. Leabo, journalism head; Dr. Clessen J. Martin, psychology head; Dr. Vaughn Bryant, section head in sociology and anthropology; Cannon, section head in linguistics, English, and Dr. William R. Smith, professor and former psychology head.

Contributions from anthropology, linguistics, mass communications, modern languages and psychology go into the three-credit-hour offering.  
Class will meet on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 1 to 2 p.m. during the spring semester.

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