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Wednesday, September 6, 1967
12:55 p.m.

MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith CINCPAC's report on the bombing
of North Viet Nam for the month of August.
I have marked the critical passages.

Pres file

W. W. R.

~~TOP SECRET/LIMDIS attachment~~

~~TOP SECRET//LIMDIS~~

Wednesday, September 6, 1967

CINCPAC MONTHLY ROLLING THUNDER SUMMARY, AUGUST, 1967

The primary effort during August was directed against the northeast rail lines, to the isolation of Haiphong from Hanoi and Hanoi-Haiphong from the rest of the country and against those lines of communication radiating southward to the Demilitarized Zone.

Almost 2800 attack sorties, or about 25 percent of the total attack sortie effort, struck targets in Route Package 6A and 6B. Weather prevented the planned level of 30 to 35 percent of the total sorties in these areas.

The rail interdiction campaign in the north was stimulated by the ROLLING THUNDER 57 follow-on authorization for attacks against selected line of communication targets in the buffer zone contiguous to China. Over 150 attack sorties were flown in this zone, resulting in significant attrition of rolling stock with approximately 250 pieces destroyed or damaged. Rolling stock sightings along the rail segments were about 50 percent less than July with nearly 80 percent of those sighted located within the 10-mile Hanoi circle and within the Chicom buffer zone.

Most of the remaining lucrative targets associated with the production, processing and transportation of war-making and war supporting materials are located within the Hanoi-Haiphong complex. The lines of communication segment extensions within the Hanoi and Haiphong 10-mile restricted areas, authorized by ROLLING THUNDER 57 plus the add-on targets, exposed approximately 135 additional targets to armed reconnaissance operations.

In the Hanoi circle, 24 fixed lines of communication target elements were attacked with over 300 sorties. Six such targets in the Haiphong circle were struck with about 50 sorties. These targets consisted primarily of railroad and highway bridges, bypasses and supply storage areas. Although the majority of these targets are not designated ROLLING THUNDER Alpha or CINCPAC Priority Targets, the cumulative effects, coupled with the high level of damage attained, further compound the problem of transshipment of vital supplies to the South.

~~TOP SECRET//LIMDIS~~

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6

NLJ 96-183By lip, NARA Date 7-11-96

Extensive armed reconnaissance was directed against the infiltration network into South Vietnam which is supplied from the Hanoi-Haiphong areas. Over 8000 sorties (about 74 percent of the attack sorties) against the network were flown in Route Packages 1 through 4 during August.

The ROLLING THUNDER 57 authority to operate against the lines of communication in the buffer zone plus the continued emphasis on interdiction of all of North Vietnam's rail lines and other lines of communication resulted in the following damaged/destroyed totals: rolling stock, over 285; motor vehicles, over 1300; and water craft, over 1640.

The period of favorable flying weather was about 20 percent less than July. However, the attack effort was over 11,500 sorties, which compares favorably with the previous three months. Six hundred sorties were flown against CINCPAC-directed ROLLING THUNDER Alpha targets. Because of numerous poor weather days, only 28 of the 46 assigned targets were struck. Although weather did influence the effort, a well-balanced campaign was maintained and numerous pre-planned secondary targets were struck.

Attack sortie distribution for August is compared with July in the following table:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Route Package Areas</u>						
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6A</u>	<u>6B</u>
July	38%	8%	7%	9%	5%	15%	18%
August	47%	8%	10%	8%	2%	12%	13%

As a result of ROLLING THUNDER operations, the six rail lines with a potential aggregate of 186 operating days were either unserviceable or doubtful a total of 77 days. This had a telling effect upon the logistic capability of North Vietnam, and caused some shifts to less efficient and more arduous modes of transportation. A breakdown by individual rail line is as follows:

- A. Through traffic on the Northwest Line, Route Package 1, was doubtful 18 days.
- B. The Northeast Line, Route Package 2, was unserviceable to through traffic 13 days, and doubtful another 4 days.
- C. Route Package 3, Haiphong to Hanoi, was unserviceable August 24-27 inclusive.

D. Route Package 4, Hanoi to Vinh, was unserviceable 10 days, and doubtful another 4 days.

E. Route Package 5, Hanoi to Thai Nguyen, was unserviceable 10 days and doubtful for an additional 5 days.

F. Route Package 9, Thai Nguyen to Kep, was closed only on the 9th and had doubtful serviceability another 8 days.

SEA DRAGON forces continued to apply pressure against the enemy coastal installations and lines of communication throughout the assigned area of operations as over 1000 fixed and moving targets were taken under fire. Destruction and damage to waterborne logistic craft increased as detections rose significantly over July. Over 90 percent of the waterborne logistic craft detected were either beached or on inland waterways.

The Destructor MK-36 Weapon Program advanced at an increased rate with over 700 weapons seeded during the month. The majority of the weapons were utilized in the northeast sector and Route Package 1. To date, less than 10 percent of the planned employment in the northeast sector has occurred. Available assets increased at the end of the month.

Sixteen Walleye weapons were released during the month against a wide spectrum of targets, achieving outstanding results. Seventh Air Force made initial utilization of newly-acquired assets, dropping two spans of a bridge with the first two weapons. The weapons continue to demonstrate excellent accuracy. To date, a total of 59 Walleye have been expended in North Vietnam with 54 hits. Usage is still controlled because of the limited number expected to be available in the immediate future.

Summary of effects:

A. Air strikes against targets in the Hanoi and Haiphong restricted area precipitated the usual responses in North Vietnamese propaganda. Claims of flagrant escalation of the war were common as Hanoi sought to call attention to these strikes while almost completely ignoring strikes against targets in the border buffer zone. It was not until two U.S. aircraft were lost over China that Hanoi recognized the occurrence of these strikes.

B. Interdiction of the Doumer Bridge on August 11 is an example of the accuracy and effectiveness of our bombing efforts against key targets in North Vietnam. Two spans of this vital structure linking Hanoi to the northeast and

east were dropped in the water, effectively denying use of the arteries which come to a focus at this point. While of significant impact militarily, the psychological impact on the civil population must be viewed as being of very nearly equal importance. The Bridge long has been considered by Hanoi residents as a symbol of progress and their link to surrounding areas. Its loss must affect adversely their morale and their confidence in North Vietnamese ability to defend vital facilities. From the standpoint of future use, bombing of the Doumer Bridge caused major damage to the structural members which will require expensive repairs. Anticipated rising water levels in the Red River will seriously complicate repair of the Bridge and will limit the usefulness of pontoon bridges used as alternate crossings.

C. As a result of disruptions to the production of electrical power by damage to the thermal power plants, the North Vietnamese have resorted to fragmented power sources. Normally, the size of these substitute sources is very small and usually supply power directly to a specific consumer. In late August three internal combustion power plants of a size not heretofore noted were detected in Haiphong. These are believed to supply power to an emergency grid rather than to individual consumers. It is possible that the North Vietnamese have found the repair of certain thermal power plants to be too costly and time consuming in the light of recurring strikes and have elected to substitute smaller dispersed generators feeding into a grid system as a temporary measure.

D. A factor tending to maintain morale in North Vietnam is the continuing receipt of inflated combat reports from the South. Along with the vigorous propaganda campaign which carries the usual themes of "US aggression" and alleged violation of the Geneva Accords, these reports probably lead the Vietnamese people to believe their situation is improving. Radio Hanoi has continued to exhort the people to greater efforts in defeating the enemy while playing down their own losses and sacrifices. At the same time, results of U.S. air strikes are erroneously reported and U.S. aircraft losses grossly exaggerated.

E. The North Vietnamese air defense capability remains nearly the same with anti-aircraft artillery continuing to be the most effective element of the system. In August, 38 U.S. aircraft were downed over North Vietnam. MIG activity increased. Two U.S. aircraft were lost to MIG's during August and four MIG's were shot down by U.S. pilots. SAM firings reached a new high in August with approximately 440 sighted. Eight U.S. aircraft were lost to SAM's, a ratio of one loss to 55 SAM's fired as compared with the ratio for May through July of one to 49.

Future intentions for ROLLING THUNDER operations are to:

- A. Maintain emphasis on the isolation of Hanoi and Haiphong from the interior of North Vietnam.
- B. Achieve the desired damage level against those ROLLING THUNDER 57 and CINCPAC targets which still require initial strike or restrike.
- C. Reduce overland and seaborne imports by interdiction and destruction of lines of communication and materiel arriving from Chicom and Haiphong.
- D. Maintain pressure throughout North Vietnam with a balanced effort in all other Route Package areas.
- E. Interdict the operation of MIG's from North Vietnamese airfields when authority is received to do so.