Today in History: Linebacker II Begins

Description

When the enemy thinks they can stall peace talks, how do you respond?Ã, With a diplomatic tools that â€œcommunicatesâ€• beyond the Paris meeting room.

On this day in 1972, Linebacker II, the largest air campaign since WWII began, with Air force and Navy planes filling the skies over North Vietnam.

For 11 days, the fury of America was unleashed over their capital and sea ports. On this day, 189 bombers (B-52D/Gs) and 39 support aircraft from the 7th Air force, and Navy and Marine Corps assets (EB-66/EA-6B/KC-135s/F-4/A-6/A-7/F-111/F-105), as well as SAR (Search and Rescue) aircraft took to the skies for a night attack. This mission targeted airfields and warehouses.

3 B-52s were shot down, and three more heavily damaged. One F-111 was also shot down, as the North Vietnamese put and estimated 220 SAMs in the air.

This afternoon, I attended an MOAA lunch and one of the men there reminded the MC to mention the history of today. It turns out that gentlemen had spent time in a B-17 over Schweinfurt, B-29s over Korea and B-52s over Vietnam. I suspect he was in the cockpit for this operation, but I did not have the opportunity to speak with him, as the room was full of living history.

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