

# Salisbury Doubts North Viets Will Negotiate

HONG KONG (AP) — Just out of Hanoi, Correspondent Harrison E. Salisbury expressed doubt yesterday that even a severe military defeat could bring North Vietnam to the conference table. Instead, he speculated, the North Vietnamese would scatter to "the jungles and mountains and fight a guerrilla war."

"I don't believe they can be compelled to come to a conference table," Salisbury, an assistant managing editor of the New York Times, said in an interview with radio Hong Kong.

"These people strike me as being very tough, very hardy, very independent and very courageous. They say, and I rather believe them, that you cannot drag them to the conference table; that they can't be beaten into submission."

Salisbury said he believed the North Vietnamese were influenced by two factors.

One was the Vietnamese defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu that brought on the Geneva settlement of 1954 dividing North and South Vietnam. "They can't help believing that some time there may be an opportunity for a Dien Bien Phu against the United States."

"Now, Point No. 2," he continued, "I do believe that they are deeply conditioned by their experience, first with the French in the negotiations immediately after the war and then again with the results of the Geneva negotiations."

"In both cases, they feel, rightly or wrongly, that they

were let down, that they reached an agreement and the other side refused to abide by them.

"As a result of that they say, time and again and quite openly, that they have to be doubly sure this time if they go into negotiations it's going to be one in which the agreement can be enforced. And those terms, an agreement which can be enforced. And those terms were used specifically to me by Pham Van Dong, their prime minister."

North Vietnamese conditions include a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all U. S. Forces from South Vietnam.

As for U. S. bombings in the North, Salisbury said "I think that we have hurt the North Vietnamese by bombing," adding:

"We haven't hurt them obviously enough to bring them to the point of negotiation. We haven't been able to reduce their military potential too much. But we have made it much harder for them to conduct the war and we have made them suffer."

Salisbury said U. S. bombers have hit oil storage depots "and they don't seem to have very many any more. They've all been knocked out by the bombing."

Salisbury's New York Times dispatches from Hanoi had reported that many civilians had been bombed.

Asked whether the United States was in fact confining its bombings to military targets

—Salisbury replied:

"As far as I could see, most of North Vietnam is a target area. That is to say, you could seldom travel a mile anywhere in the country without seeing visible evidence of the bombing offensive somewhere along the way."

"Now the reason for this is that the principal military objectives, the principal targets that we're hitting in North Vietnam, are the roads, the highways, the bridges, the railroads. The railroads, in most cases, parallel the highways."

"You don't have to be shown the bomb damage, it's right there. You see the bomb craters, you see the road destroyed and repaired. You see the broken down bridges, you travel over the pontoon bridges put in to replace them."

"And, inevitably, when you are bombing a railroad or a highway and the highway or the railroad runs through villages, the villages get it along with the highway. And this has happened in North Vietnam."

In many cases these bombs have fallen on ordinary homes. You can see them. The houses are destroyed. They have fallen in ordinary streets where there are houses and small shops and things of that kind.

"Now, the North Vietnamese are convinced, since this has happened so many times, that it's deliberate, that it is the policy on the part of the United States to bomb

civilians. "Now our president has said specifically, and I must say that I believe him, that he has given very careful orders that this is not to happen. And he believes that our air-men have carried it out to the

best of their ability."

Salisbury said most cities had anti-aircraft defenses and he saw plenty of them around Hanoi but he got the impression the countryside was relatively lightly defended against air attacks.

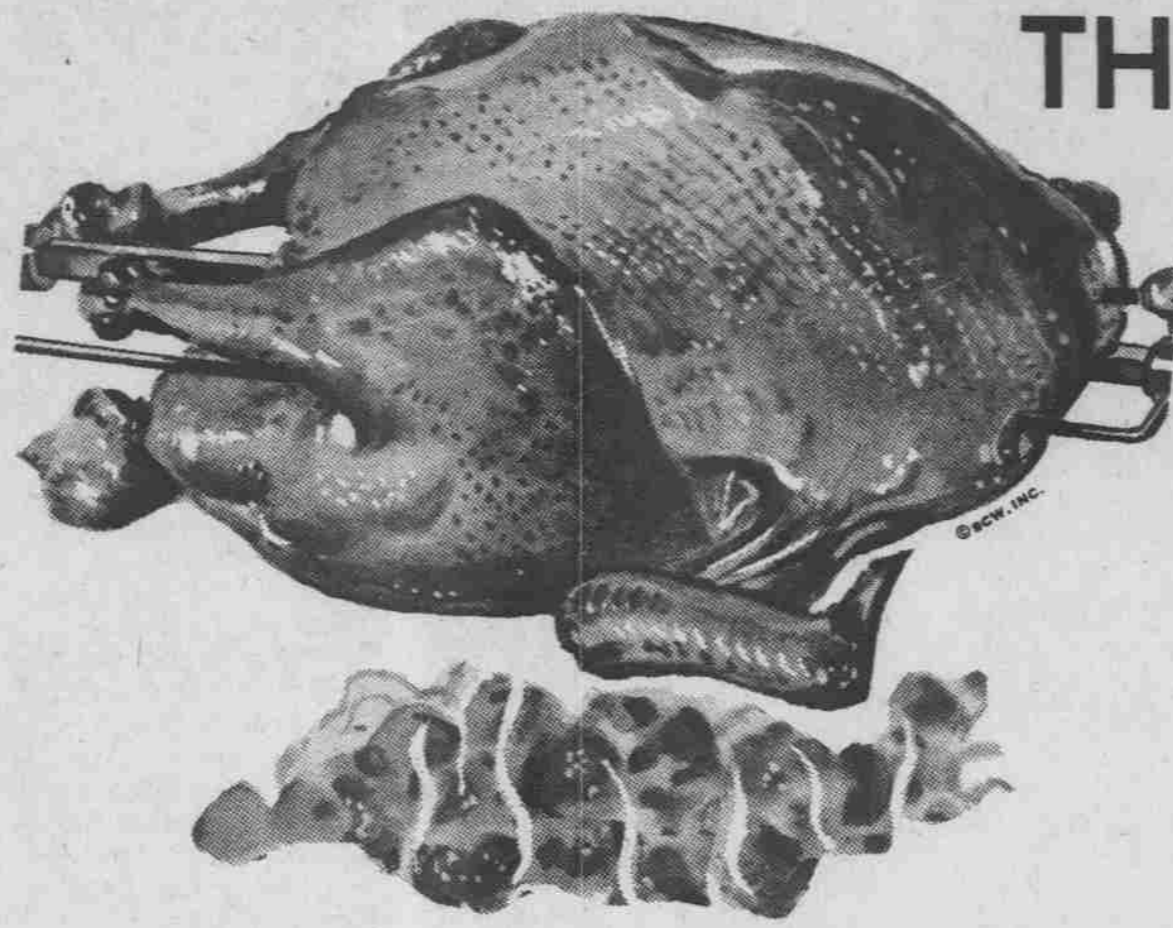
Describing his two weeks in North Vietnam, the correspondent said: "I could not go outside the city (Hanoi), make a visit to some village or town, without requesting permission and then having the foreign office take me,

along with an interpreter and a guide or some official."

He considered this a normal restriction in a Communist country "engaged in a bitter, violent war against the United States."

"After all," he added, "I

was an enemy behind the lines and they were not going to let me just wander freely over the landscape with my little camera, shooting in all directions, and then taking the pictures back to Saigon, for example."



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