

December 25, 1972
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BOMBING HALT

There apparently exists a bombing halt over North Vietnam, one which a senior American official in Saigon says has spanned more than twenty-four hours.

The Associated Press quotes the official as saying "The bombing halt has gone more than twenty-four hours now. There is nothing moving. No indication when it will start again."

The White House and other government departments maintain absolute silence on the subject, waiting, possibly, to hear if negotiating possibilities have improved.

VIETNAM

South Vietnamese military commanders in Saigon say the fighting on this Christmas Day has resulted in more casualties than on any other Christmas since the United States became involved in the Indochina war. This despite a Yuletide truce, supposedly now in effect, NO Americans are reported among the forty-five government soldiers and civilians killed and more than sixty wounded. Communist casualties are listed as sixty killed.

TRUMAN

Former President Truman's condition is listed as very critical tonight at Research Hospital in Kansas City. The latest medical bulletin says the eighty-eight-year-old former chief executive's death could occur within hours - this, of course, barring another remarkable recovery such as those he has demonstrated in the past.

QUAKE

Transport aircraft from nations throughout the world tonight are bringing tons of relief supplies to the earthquake ravaged capital city of Managua, Nicaragua. At the same time, government leader General Anastasio Somoza has ordered evacuation of the city - population four-hundred-fifty-thousand - by midnight to forestall a possible epidemic of typhoid and other diseases, brought on by thousands of unburied bodies and the absence of drinking water and sanitation facilities. Current estimates of the total dead range from six to ten thousand or even higher - although it may be months before an accurate figure can be established.

CHRISTMAS

Pope Paul celebrated Christmas mass under the dome of Saint Peter's Basilica - telling an audience of tens of thousands in the Square that his thoughts are with those peoples, and those lands, where there's "still war, hunger, suffering and distress - and where the coming of peace and justice is still awaited."

In Israeli-occupied Jordan, Christian worshippers paid their annual pilgrimage to the traditional birthplace of Jesus in Bethlehem. Church bells rang on the hour, resounding through the chill Judean hills. Meantime, Arab cleanup crews worked through the day - clearing away paper streamers, roasted chestnut shells, broken wine bottles and other litter left in Manger Square on Christmas Eve by thousands of pilgrims and tourists. And the Square - which fronts on the Church of the Nativity - today reverted to its customary use as a - parking lot.

KATZENJAMMER (tape)

Time now to hear from Lowell Thomas who gives us the genealogy of a famous funny paper family.

Tape Runs: 1:45

Outcue: So Long...

CAROL

Who wrote the words and music for the beloved Christmas carol, "Silent Night, Holy Night?" The story goes all the way back to Eighteen-Eighteen in the Austrian village of Oberndorf where Father Josef Mohr, the local priest, was casting about for something special in the way of music for his Christmas Eve mass. What's more, the church organ was broken. Something had to be done - and quickly. Just two days before Christmas, Father Mohr was inspired while walking home through the snow. Overwhelmed by the majestic silence and beauty of the winter night, he hurried home and put his feelings into words. Next day, he took the poem to his friend, musician Franz Gruber, who set the words to music. Then on Christmas Eve, says National Geographic, Mohr and Gruber rendered the first performance of "Silent Night, Holy Night" to the accompaniment of an Italian guitar. In the century and a half since, the hymn has spanned the world.