

16 April 1972

F-105G 63-8342 17 WWS, 388 TFW, USAF, Korat
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One of the responses to the North Vietnamese invasion of the South was Operation Freedom Porch Bravo, a limited attack on targets in the Hanoi/Haiphong area of the North. This was the first time US aircraft had bombed the heartland of North Vietnam since March 1968. The offensive began on the 16th with co-ordinated Air Force and Navy raids on SAM sites and POL storage in the Haiphong area. The raid was spearheaded by a 17-aircraft B-52 strike that was protected by a number of Iron Hand aircraft, stand-off jammers and chaff bombers. Over 250 SAMs were fired during these initial raids but only one USAF aircraft was lost. One of the F-105G Wild Weasels was hit by a SAM as it attacked a SAM support depot on the outskirts of Haiphong. The aircraft crashed near the harbour and neither of the crew were able to escape.