

Lavelle May Have Hurt Peace Talks

By Jack Anderson

A review of the secret record has persuaded Henry Kissinger's aides that Gen. John Lavelle's private air war against North Vietnam may well have upset the peace prospects last fall.

President Nixon had limited the air strikes against North Vietnam to "protective reaction." Our planes weren't supposed to bomb above the Demilitarized Zone, in other words, unless they were provoked by enemy action.

Unknown to the President, Lavelle's eager pilots flew at least 147 sorties against North Vietnamese airfields, missile sites and supply depots without provocation.

The general instructed his pilots not to report after these raids that there had been "no enemy action." Washington, therefore, didn't know from reading the reports that the raids had been unprovoked.

Lavelle, for his part, was understandably upset over reconnaissance photos that showed a Communist military buildup across the Demilitarized Zone. He took the authority upon himself to send planes against the most tempting targets.

If he had it to do all over again, he has now told congressmen, he would take the same action but would not falsify the reports. He assumed that he knew better than the resident how to run the war. That Lavelle didn't know,

however, was that the President was trying to end the war through delicate secret negotiations.

Raids and Talks

While Lavelle's unauthorized bombing was going on, Henry Kissinger was talking secretly with Le Duc Tho in Paris about a settlement. Kissinger assured the Hanoi leader that the United States was attacking North Vietnam only when its planes were attacked.

Le Duc Tho angrily insisted that the bombing went beyond "protective reaction."

Finally, in mid-November, he broke off the secret talks after more than a year of sporadic negotiating.

Kissinger had reason to know how sensitive the North Vietnamese were about negotiation under the gun. Back in 1967, he tried to get a dialogue going with the North Vietnamese. He sent two French friends, Herbert Marcovitch and Raymond Aubrac, to Hanoi with a peace offering.

On their return to Paris, they stayed in regular contact for several months with North Vietnam's Mai Van Bo. But they couldn't persuade Bo to sit down with Kissinger, because the peace offer had coincided with the bombing of Hanoi.

As a gesture, the United States suspended the bombing temporarily. But Bo handed the two French emissaries a

note declaring: "The bombing of Hanoi at the same time as the sending of the (peace) message constitutes a pressure. Stopping of the bombing along with the threat of a renewal has the character of an ultimatum."

Kissinger Rebuffed

When the Frenchmen pleaded, Bo stated firmly: "Because of the continued threat of bombing Hanoi, which has the character of an ultimatum, a direct meeting with Kissinger cannot take place."

Later, the Frenchmen urged Bo at least to have coffee with Kissinger at a private residence. "Let me think about how best to arrange a meeting," replied Bo, "and I will let you know."

But Bo finally explained, according to the secret record, "that Hanoi is reluctant to talk under duress with any officially connected American."

As Bo put it sharply: "The Americans are playing a double game. On the one hand they are offering us peace. On the other, they increase their bombing."

Other overtures finally brought another written message from Bo, repeating: "I accept your expression of confidence in Kissinger, but at the moment when U.S. is increasing its escalation, it was not possible for me to see him."

Kissinger never was able to

talk with Bo, and the intermediaries finally gave up. This peace approach, known by the secret code name "Pennsylvania," failed in 1967.

Finally in 1970, Kissinger held a series of secret meetings with Le Duc Tho. But these, too, were broken off after Lavelle's unauthorized bombing raids.

Street Incident

So far has Mayor John Lindsay fallen in the esteem of some New Yorkers, that after a meeting recently in Brooklyn, a sidewalk crowd of about 200 people pelted him with popsickle sticks and cigarette wrappers.

The crowd had learned he was meeting in Dubrow's, a popular New York restaurant, with the King's Highway Board of Trade. When he emerged, the largely middle-aged and elderly crowd shouted obscenities at him and flung their missiles.

© 1972, United Feature Syndicate

160 Reported Killed In Alpine Mishaps

Reuter

BERNE, June 22—Swiss mountain accidents claimed the lives of 160 people last year.

Among them were 47 skiers and 20 people who fell while walking on narrow paths or picking Alpine flowers.