



Art Buchwald

What Will Reaction of U.S. Be If Enemy Bombs Near Canada?

ONE OF THE MOST reassuring things that has happened in the past few weeks is the Johnson Administration's confident reading of what is going on in the minds of the Red Chinese. The President has assured us that there are hardly any risks involved in bombing so close to the Red Chinese border, and we're told that Peking "knows" we have no intention of getting into a war with them at this time.

What has many people in Washington worried is not that the Red Chinese will become involved directly in the Vietnam conflict (we have Dean Rusk's pledge they won't), but that what the United States is doing in North Vietnam could start a precedent for future wars of liberation.

Suppose ten years from now President de Gaulle is "stalemated" in his efforts to free the French people of Canada from their despotic rulers in Ottawa. By this time he will have committed the French army, the French navy and the French Foreign Legion to the war; yet Ottawa has refused to give up. De Gaulle will be faced with a very tough decision.

"MONSIEUR le President we have no choice but to bomb Ottawa, Toronto and

Winnipeg. English-speaking Canada must be taught a lesson once and for all," a general says.

"But if we bomb Toronto, won't we run the risk of the United States getting in the war on the side of the Canadian aggressors?"

"Mais non, Monsieur le President. If you go on the television and say that France does not desire a wider war with the United States, and all she is doing is trying to get Ottawa to come to the conference table, they will have no choice but to stay out of it."

"Ah yes, but suppose the United States does not accept this and feels that her border is being threatened."

"Do not worry, Monsieur le President. Our American experts say the United States is having so many riots in their country that they couldn't possibly get involved in a foreign engagement. This is the perfect time to escalate."

"All right, you may bomb, but only military targets. Perhaps the outskirts of the cities to start with."

THREE DAYS LATER de Gaulle is awakened in the middle of the night.

"Monsieur le President, a squadron of Mysteres got

lost and bombed Minneapolis by mistake."

"I was afraid of that."

"Do not be worried. We notified Mexico to notify Washington that it was a mistake and that we apologize, and will try not to do it again."

"That's good thinking, General. The Americans must know we have no quarrel with them. Has there been a reaction?"

"The President of the United States indicated he was very angry, but our intelligence informs us that they will not do anything but splutter."

At this point another phone rings. "Monsieur le President, our radar reports that the United States has just launched missiles that are heading straight for the French coast."

"You mean they're attacking us just because we bombed Minneapolis by mistake? I thought you assured me the United States wouldn't get into the Canadian war under any circumstances."

"Ah, Monsieur le President, one never knows what's going on in the minds of those wily Occidentals."

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