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# Von Hoffman

## Winning Is Nice

Washington

**H**OORAY! WE'RE A winner at last and Jerry Ford is the first American Prexy since F.D.R. to lead a victorious nation. Boy, was that a long losing streak, but we couldn't have broken it at a better time, and if it wasn't one of your big wins, an Austerlitz or a Trafalgar, nothing buys as much as it used to.



Nicholas Von Hoffman

From every standpoint, though, it was a great clutch victory. The kind of war we like — short, cheap and noisy. Sudden-death overtime, extra-inning wars don't make it because, if you exceed five fatalities per congressional district these days, the government has a peace movement on its hands.

How long it's been since we've had a cause we can all believe in. Wasn't it good to see those old-time headlines we haven't laid our tired squinters on for so long?

**CONGRESS RALLIES TO BACK PRESIDENT — NATION UNITES — LEADERS SAY NO SACRIFICE TOO GREAT, and the best part of it was that none was required.**

Another thing that made it such a big win was that it was purely American. None of that going-to-the-rescue-of-embattled-freedom-loving-allies-as-per-commitment stuff. This one was red, white and blue all they way. They grabbed our ship; we told 'em to give it back or we'd send in the first team and let 'em feel the heavy part of our batting order; they said they'd give it back; and we whomped 'em anyway just for trying. Oh, man, did we run 'em out of the ballpark or didn't we?

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**T**HIS WAS the biggie. Like Ron Nessen said, a straight-out Captain America war against "piracy on the high seas."

That's your worst kind of piracy, too. Low-sea piracy isn't so bad. The reason we don't flatten Quito when the Ecuadorians rip off our tuna ships every month is because that's low-sea piracy to which the proper response of a proud and mighty world power is to pay the beggars off.

The difference between Cambodian high-sea piracy and Ecuadorian tuna boat snatching is the difference in cargoes. Heisting a load of dead fish is only seajacking, which, like airjacking, is a misdemeanor punishable by giving the perpetrators money. Putting greasy, commie fingers on a Coca-Cola tanker taking vital supplies to our far-flung network of PXs is a major, Class A felony punishable by bombing and airborne assault.

The PX system is the free world's first line of defense and the Mayaguez — funny-sounding name for an American ship — was making an emergency run to restock our base at Utapao, where they were down to a 48-hour supply. Communist sappers had recently blown up a major soda pop dump there.

It was a good war from the Cambodian point of view, too, since, according to the New York Times, they've depopulated their cities and therefore should welcome our knocking them down to prevent their people from sneaking back and resuming urban ways.

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**B**ESIDES REAFFIRMING that we are a nation of belligerent penguins who can be counted on to go to war when told, we burnished our tarnished international image. Nor more will the community of nations regard us as trigger-happy, jittery people with a collective ego problem. We're not the 98-pound weakling on the beach Peking took us for. Moreover, as a strong, powerful and self-confident Number One World Power we showed patience and restraint. For 36 long hours we pursued every peaceful avenue of diplomacy. Only then did we start kicking Cambodian tail, and boy, oh boy, did it feel good!

We broke new ground with this war. This is the first war of psycho-motor reflex. America got her rocks off and Americans everywhere feel better for it. Because of the victory at Koh Tang Island, we walk with our heads a little higher, shoulders a little squarer, chins a little jauntier and ears a little deafer to the cries of Yankee Go Home.

The Big A is back.