

# A Show That's Really Bombing



**Arthur Hoppe**

**SCENE:** The cockpit of a B-52. At the controls is that square-jawed, bemedaled, veteran bomber pilot, Major Buck Ace. At his side is his co-pilot, young, eager Lieutenant Edgar Beaver, who is fresh from the States, making his first sortie.

**Beaver:** Gosh, sir, it's sure a beautiful day for bombing, not a cloud in the sky.

**Ace:** That's right, son. In all my many years of bombing out here I've never seen a better one.

**Beaver:** And I see we've got every available B-52 up again today. Boy, we're really going to blast holy heck out of those Vietnamese down there.

**Ace:** That's not Vietnam, Lieutenant. That's Cambodia.

**Beaver:** Oh, sorry, sir.

**Ace:** An understandable mistake, son. Frankly, all these Asian countries look alike to me.

**Beaver:** But I thought we were bombing Vietnam.

**Ace:** That was last month. I think you'll find, son, that while bombing Asian countries is fulfilling for the moment, the gratification doesn't last. Bomb one and a month later you'll want to bomb another.

**Beaver:** Yes, sir. But I've been so out of touch lately I didn't even know we were at war with Cambodia.

**Ace:** We're not, son. They're our allies. Most of the time out here, we bomb our allies.

**Beaver:** Oh, sure, I remember. We're probably doing it to honor our sacred commitment to General . . . What's his name? Non Lol? Lol Non?

**Ace:** Something like that. But we're not bombing him. His own air force has been taking care of that.

**Beaver:** I see. We're bombing them to stop them from bombing each other. You know, that doesn't sound right. Wait! It's the Domino Theory. As Cambodia goes, so goes . . . What goes next, sir?

**Ace** (shrugging): Wherever we'll be bombing in May.

**Beaver** (snapping his fingers): Minds and hearts! We're bombing them to win the minds and hearts of people all over the world.

**Ace** (yawning): Why not?

**Beaver:** No, wait. I forgot what the President said. The President, who inherited the war in Cambodia from his previous administration, said we had to keep bombing to protect the lives of our American boys down there.

**Ace:** Look, Lieutenant, we haven't had any troops in Cambodia in years.

**Beaver:** No, I mean in Vietnam, sir. The President said the only reason he invaded Cambodia was because the enemy was using it as a staging area to attack our boys in Vietnam. So we're saving American lives.

**Ace:** Look, Lieutenant, we haven't had any troops in Vietnam in weeks.

**Beaver:** Oh? Well, anyway, we've got to keep bombing them to make them release our POWs. We'll never rest until our POWs are home. Right, sir?

**Ace:** All our POWs are home, Lieutenant.

**Beaver:** Gosh, I didn't know that. (frowning) No offense, sir, but couldn't you give me just one good reason why we're bombing Cambodia?

**Ace:** Sure, Lieutenant. (he presses a button) Because — Bombs away! — it is there.