

Nixon has offered Hanoi a bright future indeed

WASHINGTON—It is now obvious that the North Vietnamese are not going to get a peace settlement unless they make allowance for the ancient American concept of "face."

In the American culture, loss of "face" is among the very worst things that can happen to a person; it is in a class with having your income-tax return audited.

When an American loses "face," everybody laughs at him and says he "has egg on his chin." When this happens, the rigid American code of honor makes cruel demands. The only way an American who has lost face can atone for the disgrace to his ancestors is by giving up hamburgers for 40 days.

Gracefully surrender

Rather than accept this fate, Americans will go to any extreme to save face. Knowing this, smart nations never put Americans in a position where their face may be lost. Instead, they gracefully surrender any momentary advantage they may have, and let the grateful Americans in return do wonderful things for them.

The North Vietnamese, unfortunately, seem unable to grasp this simple principle for dealing with Americans. As President Nixon's speech the other night made clear, they show no sensitivity at all for American face.

The fact is that the United States is eager to get out of the war and will do so if offered a few face-saving concessions from Hanoi. Hanoi doesn't even have to surrender. All we ask is that it quit fighting, return our prisoners of war and stand at attention when "The Star Spangled Banner" is played.

Program of concessions

Hanoi seems to think these are unreasonable terms, but this is probably because it does not understand how much the United States is prepared to do in return for having its face saved. In fact, the administration has a full program of concessions it will make immediately if North Vietnam accepts President Nixon's peace terms.

First, Hanoi will be given a franchise in the National Football League. A domed stadium seating 80,000 persons, equipped with copper gutters to carry off the monsoon downpours, will be built with capital provided by three Texas billionaires who have ded-

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icated their lives to propagating the philosophy, "Make football, not war."

Billy Graham crusades

Second, Billy Graham will lead a 30-day crusade in Haiphong, Vientiane, Luang Prabang or any other major city of Hanoi's choice.

Third, President Nixon will ask Congress for a special supplemental appropriation to make it possible for Hanoi to obtain Kentucky fried chicken franchise installations at seven-mile intervals from the demilitarized zone to the Chinese border.

Fourth, Professor Henry Kissinger will make a highly publicized secret visit to Hanoi.

Call to locker room

Fifth, on the day the fighting stops, President Nixon will make a telephone call to the locker room of the North Vietnamese central committee and congratulate Premier Pham Van Dong on finishing No. 2.

If Hanoi were willing to swallow its pride and surrender, of course, Washington would show its gratitude in far more substantial ways. As Germany and Japan attest in their quarter-of-a-century progress from surrender to triumph, the road to the championship begins with an unconditional surrender to Uncle Sam.

Precisely what the United States might do in return for an unconditional surrender is uncertain, but there is some sentiment here for setting Hanoi up in the steel industry on a scale that would permit it to dominate the American market within the decade.

Vast aid program

The livelier prospect is for a vast aid program to the North Vietnamese bicycle industry, which has shown great capacity during the war, and which, with sufficient American capital, could probably take over the American bicycle market within three years.

Hanoi's future could be bright, if its leaders but saw the light. Even a Disneyland is not out of the question.