

Dick and Pat See the Bums



Arthur Hoppe

LOOK, DICK, look and see. See those people outside our nice white house. They do not look like tourists. Are they tourists, Dick?

No, Pat, no. They are not tourists. They are bums. They are bums because they believe in violence. Violence is bad. I deplore violence. Violence never solves anything. Violence gets people killed. Violence is very bad.

I see, Dick. They are bums because they do violent things. What violent things do they do, Dick?

They throw rocks, Pat. They burn buildings. They march across boundary lines without permits. They cause the police to club and shoot them.

Oh, Dick, those are bad things. Why do the bums do these bad things?

They are angry, Pat. They are angry at the war. They want me to stop the war. They do these bad things to make me stop the war.

They are silly, Dick. They are silly to do bad things to make you stop the war. You cannot stop a war by doing bad things.

You are right, Pat. Violence only begets violence. But the bums are even more angry now. They are more angry because they think I have made a bigger war. They are more angry because I marched our soldiers across the boundary line into Cambodia.

Did you have a permit, Dick?

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I DO NOT NEED a permit, Pat. I can march our soldiers anywhere I want, if I think it is right.

Why do the bums think you have made a bigger war, Dick?

They do not understand, Pat. I did not march into Cambodia to make a bigger war. I marched into Cambodia to make a smaller war.

I understand, Dick. Is it going well?

Yes, Pat. We have burned many buildings. We have killed many people. It is going very well.

Oh, Dick, these sound like bad things.

Let me be candid, Pat. I deplore burning buildings. I deplore killing people. But we must do these things in order to stop the war.

How will doing these things stop the war, Dick?

By doing these things, Pat, we will make Hanoi stop the war. Hanoi will not listen to us. Hanoi is intransigent. Hanoi will not stop the war just because we politely ask it to.

Oh, Dick, you are so brave and good. You are so brave and good to do these things to make Hanoi stop the war.

Yes, Pat. I do not like to do these things. But I must make Hanoi listen to us. I must make Hanoi stop the war.

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OH, DICK, LISTEN. Listen to those bums. They are shouting. They are yelling. They are doing bad things.

Close the window, Pat. I will not listen to a bunch of bums who do bad things.

Yes, Dick. But why do they think doing bad things will make you stop the war? Where do they get such ideas?

I do not know, Pat. But I have a wish. I wish these bums would be more like us.