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Peace and Dr. Kissinger

Ubiquitous Henry Kissinger has emerged as the cartoonist's delight, almost a self-caricature. It no longer is a simple matter to exaggerate Dr. Kissinger's travels, such as been the constancy of his motion. Even the campaign film extolling President Nixon's virtues at the Republican National Convention showed Dr. Kissinger air-

As the President's Man Friday, Dr. Kissinger has been a spectacular traveler. Occasionally, the results, too, have been spectacular, such as the original Peking trip which set up President Nixon's visit. The singular success of that secret mission put the world on notice that Dr. Kissinger can produce diplomatic wonders. To date, however, he has been unable to produce spectacular results from the widely advertised secret talks with North Vietnamese diplomats.

Wednesday's rumors that Dr. Kissinger had returned from the 18th secret session with peace in the bag were deflated quickly by the White House.

Lending credence to the administration's denial of success was the report that U.S. planes had made more than 300 tactical air strikes, including the bombing of a major military storage complex near Hanoi, on the day of Dr. Kissinger's return home. And that — the bombing — would appear to be the most reliable clue to the status of the negotiations.

When Mr. Nixon announces that he has ordered a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam, it may be safe to assume that the outlook for a negotiated settlement has improved considerably. Conversely, every time Dr. Kissinger steps aboard a plane to Paris it does not necessarily mean that peace is about to break out.