

Wait a minute! Nixon's bombing

is the honorable way

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Let's get it straight: Richard Nixon's resumption of the bombing is the logical not the illogical, the honorable not the dishonorable, consequence of the breakdown of the negotiations in Paris as the result of North Vietnamese mickey mouse.

The effort is being made to distinguish between the views of Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon on the matter of a satisfactory settlement. It will not succeed because it is not true. Kissinger, when he said that peace was in sight, interpreted several commitments made by the North Vietnamese as made seriously. When, on returning to Paris he

discovered that they were playing games — that, for instance, "international supervision" of the cease fire, as agreed to in October, was being interpreted by the North Vietnamese as a mere 250 supervisors instead of the 5,000 deemed necessary by the State and Defense Departments, that half of those 250 would have to stay in Saigon, and the other half could not use even a Piper Cub to detect illegal military movement — Kissinger came back to Washington.

What was it?

What was it that changed the mind of

the North Vietnamese? Clearly, the ease with which they absorbed the landslide victory of Mr. Nixon on November 7. Remember, Hanoi had been predicting that if Nixon were reelected, Hanoi would disappear from the face of the map. When November 8 came along and the skies were clear, Hanoi obviously decided to resort to verbal tricks in Paris, and the result was the breakdown in negotiations.

It is reasonable to suppose — indeed there is in fact some evidence that that is the case — that the men who govern North Vietnam are, as regards the war in the south, of three general dispositions. There are the hawks, who would fight to conquer the south even if it meant losing half the population; the swing voters, who would like to push on to victory if it can be achieved with moderate exertion; and the doves who believe that North Vietnam has bled too much, and that it is better to end the war now and perhaps resume it later on politically. During October, the middle group swung over to the doves. In November, they swung back to the hawks. They can swing back tomorrow, and that is the strategy of Mr. Nixon: not to give up hope, but to make it plain that the consequences of failing to negotiate, are — more war.

Strange analysis

American critics of Mr. Nixon and of President Thieu are strange in their analysis. They decry what they themselves characterize as the "jubilation" felt by South Vietnamese at the resumption of American bombing. Now as we speak thus primly about the use of bombs over North Vietnam, there are lodged in South Vietnam about 150,000 enemy troops. The American equivalent would be about two million enemy troops lodged in various parts of this country. Why would it be obscene, in such circumstances, for Americans to be jubilant on learning that the military bases

supplying those enemy troops are being bombed by an ally?

The New York Times, which only 10 years ago was announcing the need for the United States to stand by its commitments and to resist aggression by the north, is tireless now in its criticism of Mr. Nixon, and in its last blast, committed a Freudian slip of truly revealing dimensions. "President Nixon," the editorial says, "has resorted once more to naked force (by the way, I wish someone would sometime advise us what is the opposite of naked force) to try to obtain his own larger objectives in Southeast Asia — objectives which are neither realistic nor essential to this country's security interests."

Reached by Quisling

Never mind for a moment the second of Mr. Nixon's objectives, as described, concentrate on the first. The New York Times is telling us that it is not "realistic" to bring about a cease-fire that would result in an independent South Vietnam. But it was only such a cease-fire as that which we ever agreed to sign. Is the Times saying that since it was always unrealistic to negotiate with Hanoi other than to endorse North Vietnam's drive to dominate the south, then Kissinger's negotiations were duplicitous to begin with? How deeply the hypocrisy runs.

"... Civilized man," says the editorial, "will be horrified at the spectacle of the world's mightiest air force mercilessly pounding a small Asian nation in an abuse of national power and disregard of humanitarian principles." How confidently The New York Times confers the title of civilized. By its standards, the high point of 20th century civilization was reached by Quisling.