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# New Year's Nightmare

This year began with exceptional promise as President Nixon prepared daring new initiatives in American foreign policy, including most notably his plans for a historic visit to Communist China.

As 1972 progressed, prospects for the "generation of peace" that the President repeatedly forecast were dramatically enhanced by Mr. Nixon's successful trips, first to Peking and then to Moscow. These triumphs were crowned, and the President's subsequent political victory sealed, by the pre-election announcement of Mr. Nixon's chief foreign policy adviser, Henry Kissinger, that peace was at last "at hand" in Indochina.

The start of this New Year's weekend should have been a time for universal rejoicing, for ringing out an old year well spent, for ringing in a new year of great expectations. Instead the world stands stunned and horrified by the return of a nightmare, the resurrection of a wasted war that has poisoned national and international life for more than a decade. The American bombs falling on heavily populated areas of North Vietnam in unprecedented volume have dimmed prospects not only for peace in Indochina but for the wider détente for which all mankind has prayed. They have transformed the United States from symbol of hope to object of fear and reproach. The future is filled with foreboding.

The turn of the year, nevertheless, offers an opportunity for reappraisal, for new beginnings. Americans have a special obligation this New Year's Eve to reassess what is being done in their name in Indochina and to demand in the new year the peace promised but not delivered in 1972. The first order of business for 1973 is to lay to rest for once and for all the Vietnam nightmare.