

**Have you any idea
how many times
Washington
has wrecked our
chances for peace
in Vietnam?
By accident.
Or deliberately.**

This is the chilling, almost unbelievable record of secret maneuvers for peace — and the high-level blunders and bombings that blasted them all into oblivion.

It involves heads of state, diplomats, and undercover men. And as bizarre a sequence of memory lapses, breakdowns in communication, bad timing, and errors as ever blocked the path to the bargaining table.

There was, for instance, Marigold.

Marigold was the State Department's code name for a brilliant exercise in secret diplomacy, in '66, involving peace feelers, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., a Pole, an Italian ambassador, and a fifth floor apartment with a curious history, at 135 Durong Pasteur, in Saigon.

At a crucial moment, the promising Marigold went up in smoke. Why? Because the President and his civilian staff forgot to call off the Hanoi air strike they had authorized two weeks earlier at a regular Tuesday target-picking lunch. ("Oh, my God," swore a senior security official as he scanned the headlines that morning, "we lost control.")

Marigold, unfortunately, was no isolated instance.

- There was the eleventh-hour race one night to the London station by the Prime Minister's aide to deliver an embarrassing last-minute change in a peace proposal to Kosygin. A change that was cabled from LBJ — and ruined the most fruitful of "talks."
- There was the ghastly weekend when peace hung on a word with two meanings. "Cong nhan." Nobody knew which one Ho Chi Minh meant, and we went to the wrong man to find out.
- There was the cuff link incident.
- There was the case of the Frenchman who found himself on a secret mission to Hanoi because Ho was his daughter's godfather.
- There was the astonishing indication that a major peace initiative had been rejected in Washington although it had never reached the President.
- There was . . .

The list goes on, incident after super-charged incident.

For this is the sensational secret side of diplomacy.

Some of it leaked by men still in office.

Some of it still highly classified and marked *nodis*. Which in State Department parlance means NO DISTRIBUTION.

This headline-making story goes up to the final breakthrough for the first meeting in Paris.

It's stunning. It's fantastically exciting.

And it raises some ugly questions.

The Secret Search for Peace in Vietnam

The untold story, in dramatic detail, of the behind-the-scenes maneuvers to negotiate an end to the war in Vietnam

David Kraslow & Stuart H. Loory



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