

24 June 1972

HW:

The attached example of administration doublespeak is especially interesting in view of an argument advanced by Franz Schurmann a couple of days ago. He holds that the main purpose of Kissinger's trip to Peking was to persuade the Chinese NOT to intervene in the war in Vietnam. He based this mainly on two factors. One was a statement by the Chinese that the stepped up bombing of North Vietnam was a threat to China's national interest. The other is that this bombing campaign involves doing things we did only in a limited way from 1965-68 or didn't do at all: that is, we are now trying to destroy the country's physical plant -- the rail lines, the dykes, the hydroelectric dams.

Schurmann holds that the Chinese statement about their national interest being threatened alludes to this new increased bombing and that they are no more likely to sit around doing nothing than they were in 1950 when MacArthur went into North Korea and approached the Chinese border. For one thing, bombing the dykes and dams means flooding the entire Red River delta, which will result in mass starvation, which the Chinese will therefore have to help take care of. They are not going to take this, he contends, and can be expected to send in troops, if only to the extent of the 60,000 or so they had in the country between 1965 and 1968 to help keep the rail line open.

Schurmann says that in 1966 the Chinese in Paris leaked to the French the three conditions under which they would have to intervene to save Hanoi and which he says were widely accepted to reflect no more than routine Chinese self-interest. These were 1, if the U.S. bombed Chinese territory, ~~or~~ or pursued North Vietnamese Migs to Chinese fields or bombed stockpiles along the border, or 2) if the U.S. should actually invade North Vietnam, and 3, if the U.S. destroys the North Vietnamese dyke system.

All this takes on added interest when considered against the background of the Gen. Lavelle caper. Schurmann believes Nixon has caved in to the Joint Chiefs, who have wanted to do this all along. He suggests Kissinger has been telling the Chinese, look, don't freak out, this is no threat to your security. And Chou is saying, it IS a threat to our security, we have commitments and will keep them. If you want to solve this, make peace with Hanoi and the ~~NLF~~ NLF with the 7-point peace proposal. If the bombing continues, says Schurmann, the Chinese will have to intervene whether they want to or not. If Nixon stops it, assuming he can, the Chinese may hold off. But it's up to Nixon.

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