Bombing Pause Futile Attempt

In a dramatic 40-minute speech Sunday night the President told the nation he had ordered the cessation of bombing in all areas of Vietnam except that area just North of the Demilitarized Zone.

"We are prepared to move immediately toward peace through negotations," he said.

The President challenged the North Vietnamese to seriously consider negotations but warned "If peace does not come now through negotations, it will come when Hanoi understands that our common resolve is unshakeable, and our common strength invincible."

The timing of the announcement made the probability of its success doubtful.

A bombing pause was applauded by many "doves" as an important first step toward peace, and for the time being it has placated those seeking an alternative to the administration's previous war policy.

According to the South Vietnamese government they were not consulted before the President made the move, and have apparently interpreted the pause as a sign of weakening U. S. determination.

The Soviet government said Monday it would make no effort to aid the British in their attempt to arrange negotiations between the U. S. and North Vietnam.

A North Vietnamese official in Paris unofficially said that his government would reject the offer because the United States had not completely stopped "all acts of aggression" against the North.

This would include any air action along the DMZ, any ground movement or any naval bombardment.

The President had stated that he could not "in all conscience stop all the bombing" because it would endanger the lives of Allied forces along the DMZ where continuing enemy buildup continues to threaten Allied forward positions.

The area free from attack includes "almost 90 per cent of North Vietnam's population, and most of its territory," including heavily populated and food producing areas.

The President did not set any time limit on the bombing pause but the administration will probably allow three weeks for some sign of de-escallation from the Communists.

The move appears to be a sincere attempt by the President to begin negotiations, and a political move to demonstrate to our foreign critics and those critics at home that this country has taken the first step.

This is the tenth time in three years that there has been a bombing pause. The enemy has always taken advantage of the situation to regroup and resupply.

Pilots who regularly fly North are disappointed and from their personal viewpoint it can only mean rebuilt missile and anti-aircraft sights.

For the next three weeks the Ho Chi Minh trail will probably look like a Los Angeles freeway with fresh supplies moving South—after this country expended so many lives to effectively leave the foe rice and gun hungry.

The most important psychological reason for failure is that the President used the same speech to announce that he would not run for reelection.

Why should the enemy negotiate now when a new administration next January might give them a better opportunity—a peace on their terms?

If the same pattern of rejection follows this latest announcement, the result will be a bloody May with enemy troops in the South well supplied and bridge, railroad, and manufacturing sights in the North rebuilt.

Peace Could Result From LBJ Decision

President Johnson's twin bombshells, his withdrawal from the presidential race and his cutback in the bombing of North Vietnam, come at a time when there are suggestions that the North Vietnamese population has become bone-tired of the war and perhaps more difficult to handle. If that is the case, the President's actions could lead to peace negotiations.

One way or the other, the President's announcements probably landed with stunning force in Hanoi.

IN ONE WAY the Communists are likely to be discomforted. The announcements lob the peace ball into their court, and world opinion will await their response. The President's decisions present a challenge to Moscow — he has asked it to use its role as co-chairman of the 1954 Geneva conference to further the cause of Vietnam peace.

The President's suspension of bombing of 90 per cent of North

An AP News Analysis

Vietnam goes a long way toward meeting a major condition laid down by Hanoi for talks. The pause is open-ended. It provides a lever, if they choose to use it, for the Russians, and perhaps the French, to apply pressure on Hanoi to respond.

Only two weeks ago, in the name of President Ho Chi Minh, Hanoi published a 22-article decree promising Draconian punishment for North Vietnamese opponents of the war.

The decree listed as punishable "counterrevolutionary crimes" such activities as "opposition to the fatherland and the people's democratic power, sabotage of Socialist construction, undermining national defense and the struggle against U.S. aggression." Activities against "security and order," defecting or abetting defection to the enemy, attempts to destroy the political power in the North, "counterrevolutionary propaganda" and a long list of other offenses are punishable by death or long imprisonment.

THIS WAS NOT the first time that North Vietnamese internal announcements indicated trouble arising from weariness with the war. Others in the past have dealt with manpower shortages plus transport and distribution problems.

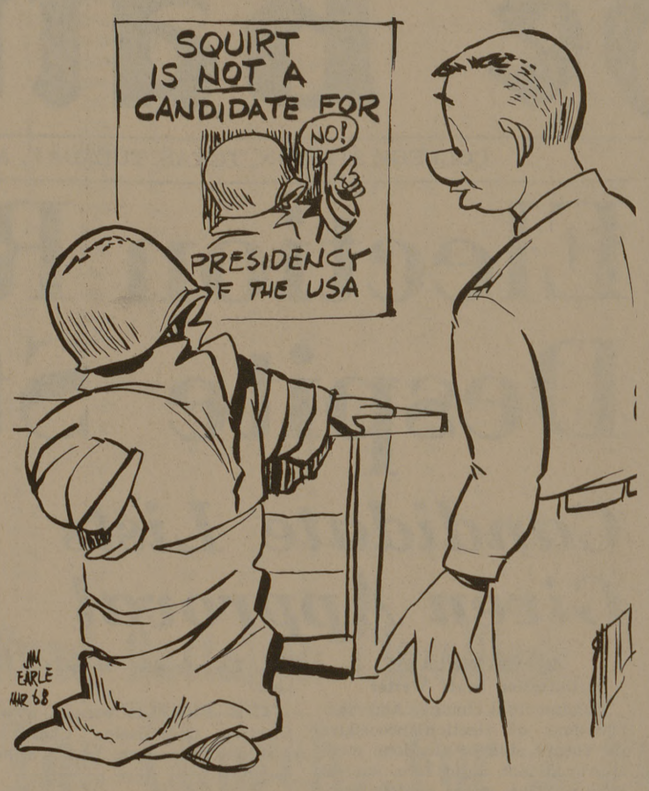
The question now is whether, in the light of the dramatic developments in Washington and the new pressures likely to be generated by them, Hanoi will begin to see possible long-range profit in responding to the American overture.

The removal of President Johnson from the American election campaign might encourage Hanoi to hang on and accept the hardships of the next seven months until after the U.S. balloting, to see what that might bring.

Meanwhile, Hanoi propaganda could claim that the U.S. Presi-

(See Johnson, Page 3)

CADET SLOUCH by Jim Earle



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— Sound Off —

Editor,
The Battalion:

I am Charles Hoffman and I am a run-off candidate for Vice-President of the Class of '71. I feel qualified by past experience. I have served in numerous leadership positions in various organizations.

As for our class, I advocate class meetings where class members can express their ideas and can participate in the planning of class activities.

Often, we find ourselves on campus over a weekend with not much to do that is entertaining. I believe it is time for our class to plan some extra activities for some of these long weekends.

Specifically, if elected, I pledge my efforts to carry out the voters' wishes and to work with them so that more class members will have a voice in their student government. I need each member of the class of '71's vote and support in this Thursday's run-off election.

Charles Hoffman '71,
Candidate for Vice-Pres.

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PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz

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