

The Montreal Gazette, December 31, 1965

U.S. Peace Pressure

The United States government is currently making a fresh attempt to reach a negotiated settlement of the Vietnamese war.

It is unfortunate that this attempt to follow up the Christmas truce with negotiations has become so public. As on earlier occasions, the publicity has drawn forth the usual denials and denunciations from Hanoi. No one knows whether these refusals to negotiate are seriously meant; in order to keep the Chinese government happy, North Viet Nam must spurn all offers in its public statements.

China apparently wants the war to continue. At no cost to itself, it can sit back and watch the United States become bogged down in an Asian war which is requiring an ever-growing commitment of American resources. The American forces are certainly exacting a heavy price from their enemy. But it is the North Vietnamese, not the Chinese, who are paying the price. Hence China is prepared to treat all American efforts to negotiate as "a plot of peaceful negotiations."

It is unlikely that China will ever encourage Hanoi to negotiate. Encouragement must come from other Communist countries, and principally from Russia. President Johnson is obviously trying to build up pressure for negotiations from many directions. As added inducement, the United States has not yet resumed bombing of North Viet Nam.

North Viet Nam should, in its own interest accept this attempt to get negotiations started. It may never again have as favorable an opportunity.

The Ottawa Journal, December 30, 1965

A Risk for Peace

It is now clear that the suspension of U.S. bombing of North Viet Nam is a carefully calculated gesture to demonstrate American interest in peace negotiations to the Viet Cong and the world.

The pause is too long to be explained away - as last May's six-day lull was