

Aggressive action by North Vietnam to bring about a communist "liberation", (which means communist rule) of the South must end.

Continued bombing action, however, against North Vietnam beyond a certain point may not bring about this result. Instead of inducing the authorities in Hanoi to halt their attacks on the South, it may only harden their determination to pursue, and even intensify, their present course of action.

The retaliatory strikes against North Vietnamese military targets, for which there has been great provocation, aim at making it clear that the maintenance of aggressive policies toward the South will become increasingly costly to the Northern regime.

I think, that after two months of air strikes, the message has been received "loud and clear". The authorities in Hanoi must know that the United States, with its massive military power, can mete out even greater punishment. They also know that, for this reason, the costs of a continuation of their aggression against South Vietnam could be incalculable.

If, however, the desired political response from Hanoi has not been forthcoming, which would indicate a change in policy, this may result from a desire to avoid what would appear to Hanoi to be the public humiliation of backing down under duress. The Northern communist regime is probably also under pressure from another direction to avoid the public abandonment of a policy which fits the Communist Chinese doctrine of "wars of national liberation".

If, then, a series of increasingly powerful retaliatory strikes against North Vietnam does not bring about this preliminary condition of a cease-fire, surely serious consideration must be given to every other way in which the stalemate might be broken.

There are many factors which I am not in a position to weigh. But there does appear to be at least a possibility that a pause in air strikes against North Vietnam at the right time might provide the Hanoi authorities with an opportunity, if they wish to take it, to inject some flexibility into their policy without appearing to do as the direct result of military pressure.

If such a suspension took place in a limited time, then the rate of incidents in South Vietnam would provide a fairly accurate way of measuring