

Johnson On Vietnam

President Johnson's Sunday night speech has turned out to be something less than expected.

Following the initial impact of his declaration to halt the bombing other than in the DMZ and his desire not to seek another term as President, we have received additional information that seems faintly like a safe Johnson draft bid.

In his broadcast the President led the American citizens to believe that there would be a mass bombing halt while in truth it appears that bombing is still being carried out more than 150 miles from the DMZ. If the President's intent is to protect troops until they can be withdrawn or otherwise provided for, then there is reason to believe his honesty. If the move was only to placate the doves in his audience, then we would like to know if he will also decide to disregard his presidential withdrawal intentions.

We believe that the President might indeed have decided to subject himself to a possible draft and save the agony of losing even more support. Perhaps he realized that, to be safe, he could pull back his bid and await a massive draft that would be enough to carry him over the top in the primary convention as well as the election.

Hanoi has now said that they will sit at a conference table with the United States. They will probably attempt to negotiate a complete bombing halt before discussing peace terms. This had appeared to be the intent of the President's speech at first, but now it seems not to be the case.

The President's speech ended with a hopeful note which soured as the week progressed. It appears that again the President has been less than aboveboard, and we can only hope that peace is in the offing.