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Mitchell Calls Clark A 'Dupe'

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Washington

John N. Mitchell, the former head of President Nixon's re-election organization, said yesterday that Ramsey Clark was "duped" during a recent visit to North Vietnam and has allowed himself to be used by that country in a propaganda campaign.

Mitchell was among several prominent Republicans who assailed Clark yesterday for saying that he believes some American prisoners will be released on Jan. 20, 1973, the date of the inauguration of the President, and all of them by April 20, 1973, if Senator George S. McGovern is elected president.

Mitchell said the former attorney general was playing upon "the deep concern" of the families of the prisoners. He urged McGovern, the Democratic presidential candidate, either to repudiate or endorse the statement.

REPLY

McGovern, in Youngstown, Ohio, said Clark may have made a mistake in "judgment and taste" by criticizing American policies while in North Vietnam, but he said it was silly of Mitchell, also a former attorney general, to refer to Clark as a "dupe" of the Hanoi government.

In Miami Beach, after appearing before the platform committee of the Republican national convention, Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird criticized Clark's report that American prisoners were being treated humanely by the North Vietnamese.

Laird said he failed to understand how Clark could term as humane the refusal of the North Vietnamese to tell the families of prisoners or those listed as missing whether the men were alive or dead.

ACCUSATION

Earlier in the day, the Defense Department accused Clark of withholding information from the government about American prisoners. Daniel Z. Henkin, assistant secretary for public affairs, said Clark had an obligation "as a responsible citizen and as a former government official" to notify in advance the families of ten American prisoners shown in a film Clark used during an interview Monday in San Francisco.

Laird said the Defense Department is checking pictures brought from North Vietnam by Clark, but he said a majority of the American prisoners shown in them "are people who have been in this role before."

Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, the Senate minority leader, joined the attacks on Clark by saying he had allowed himself "to be used by Hanoi." In a short speech on the Senate floor, Scott said Clark had injected presidential politics into the prisoner-of-war issue.

JAVITS

Senator Jacob Javits (Rep-N.Y.), said earlier he questioned the advisability of Clark's broadcasts on Hanoi radio. Clark said he had not made a direct appearance on radio but had made remarks to journalists in Hanoi that may have been recorded and broadcast later.

One Democrat, Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington, also questioned the propriety of Clark's statements. Appearing on the NBC "Today" show, Jackson said he believes Clark should not make "general statements without saying he was taking a conducted tour" in North Vietnam.

"He ought to make a full disclosure about what he asked to see, what he saw and what he did not see," Jackson said.

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