

Ramsey Clark's Vietnam Report

RAMSEY CLARK HAS BEEN CALLED "contemptible" by Secretary of State Rogers for taking part in a broadcast over Radio Hanoi and a "dupe" by John N. Mitchell for allowing himself to be used by North Vietnam in a propaganda campaign.

All three of these figures, the accusers and accused, share the distinction of being former attorneys-general of the United States. One thing they do not have in common is an acquaintance with wartime North Vietnam. Clark is the only one who has visited there, and he is currently making his views known about what he saw. These are not views favorable to United States policy; in fact Mr. Clark has been heard to say in his own voice over Radio Hanoi that the air war is being conducted inhumanely and with "no possible justification in the eyes of common human morality."

SECRETARY ROGERS professed himself unable to remember any time in our history when such a thing had happened. The appropriateness of an American letting himself be heard on the North Vietnam radio can certainly be questioned; even Senator McGovern concedes that Clark may have made a mistake in "judgment and taste" by criticizing American bombing policy and other policies while in North Vietnam.

In rejoinder to all this blasting, Clark says he never did go on the air live for Radio Hanoi, that he declined to, but that he had been questioned about the bombing by North Vietnamese reporters carrying tape recorders and no doubt that was the way his voiced criticisms came to be transmitted.

He did come home with films he took and with a pocketful of letters from 10 "healthy," humanely treated prisoners of war whom he saw. Yesterday he testified in Washington that he had seen extensive damage done to the North Vietnamese dikes and sluices, to villages, to hospitals and to schools. So far he has not pronounced this bombing to have been deliberate.

CLARK'S FATHER, the retired Supreme Court justice, Tom Clark, is sure that his son will be able to support all that he reports, but in political Washington few are interested in going calmly into the facts he may possess. Indeed the Republican orchestrated denunciation of Clark has been rather violent, but that is hardly surprising. At Miami Beach four years ago he was the Johnson administration official whom Mr. Nixon most savagely attacked in his nomination-acceptance speech. If Ramsey Clark was an issue in the '68 election, he may well be one again.