

## Visit to Da Nang

# Reds' U.S.-Made Base

### South Vietnam

The Da Nang air base, which was constructed at the cost of hundreds of millions of American dollars in the mid-1960s for the biggest bombing campaign in the history of air warfare, is now a new key transport center for the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

The base and the city were abandoned by South

Vietnamese forces last month and occupied by Communist-led troops.

An Ilyushin-18 airliner with 80 passengers flew here from Hanoi yesterday morning in one hour and 20 minutes. It landed on a broad concrete runway that is one of the longest in the world. The runway's surface looked to be in first-class condition.

A half-dozen American-made military helicopters were visible in a maze of revetments near the passen-

ger lounge. Far across the field the khaki tails of perhaps half a dozen fighter bombers from the United States could be seen.

In front of an intact hangar stood a large yellow mobile crane. Nearby was a red tank truck. Both were "American" made. In the glass-walled control tower, the equipment which Americans installed and the Saigon government air force left behind now serves the new governmental power

here. The tower looks completely unharmed.

Power lines lead into administration offices, maintenance hangars and storage buildings.

There are no cut, dangling lines or broken poles. Here and there are such American-made items as two-wheeled, manually operated fire extinguisher units, munitions trailers, and four-wheel-drive motor vehicles.

The air passenger lounge is located near the former administration building of the Saigon air force Squadron 213.

The squadron's insignia is a colorful bird of prey with forked lightning in its talons. This insignia still decorates the outside wall of the building. No graffiti mar it.

In the lounge, furnished mostly with American-made upholstered chairs and couches, passengers are served tall glasses of Coca-Cola by PRG hostess Nguyen Duy Trinh, formerly a teacher of Vietnam literature in a Da Nang school. She is slender and graceful with waist-length dark hair. She wears the traditional Ao Dai. Hers is a floral design in white and rose.

There is a large picture of Ho Chi Minh over the doorway of the lounge and on one wall hangs a long red cloth with one of the quotations from North Vietnam's

late leader: "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom."

United Press