

HEARINGS OPENED IN CAPITOL BLAST

Expert Asserts Bomb Could
 Have Been in a Briefcase

By MARJORIE HUNTER
 Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 2—An Army bomb expert told Senators today that the explosives that shattered a portion of the Capitol early yesterday might have been smuggled into the building in "an ordinary briefcase."

Capt. Edwin Joyner of the 67th Ordnance Battalion at Fort McNair in Washington, also speculated that the blast had been caused by 15 to 20 pounds of dynamite connected to a "delayed timing device."

His testimony came as a Senate Public Works subcommittee began an inquiry into ways to tighten security at the capitol.

Elsewhere in Washington, the James Forrestal Building, housing 5,700 Defense Department workers, was evacuated in mid-afternoon today when the second of two telephoned bomb threats was received. A search failed to uncover any explosives but the employees were given "administrative leave" for the rest of the day.

The Weather Underground

Meanwhile, a group calling itself the Weather Underground claimed responsibility for the blast at the Capitol, which officials said caused "upwards of \$300,000" damage.

In identical letters received today by The New York Times and The Associated Press, the group wrote:

"We have attacked the Capitol because it is, along with the White House and the Pentagon, the worldwide symbol of the Government which is now attacking Indochina."

The typewritten letters, signed in red ink, were dated Sunday, Feb. 28, before the explosion, but postmarked yesterday afternoon, after the blast. The bomb exploded at 1:32 A.M. yesterday. The letter had been mailed from Elizabeth, N. J.

women mobilize to brood small baskets of earth up to the people at the top of the crater. Soon the crater is filled. People all over the world are encouraged by what we do here in the heart of the Empire.

Nixon will see that what he took for acquiescence was really the calm before the storm.

THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND

Weather Underground

LETTER TELLS OF BOMBING: The last few lines and signature on a letter received by The New York Times yesterday from group that said it had bombed the Capitol.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is studying the letters. However, Attorney General John N. Mitchell said today that there had been no indication that a "conspiratorial group was involved."

"Every time we have one of these occurrences, there are such communications," he said, "but it doesn't mean they were actually involved."

The letters attacked President Nixon and his advisers and pledged that "young people here will do everything we can to harass, disrupt and destroy this murderous Government."

The word "America" was spelled "Amerika" in the let-

ters. A 30-piaster stamp of the Vietcong and a rainbow drawn with watercolors appear on the first page of each letter.

As bomb experts and F.B.I. agents continued sifting through the rubble from the Capitol explosion, The Washington Daily News reported today that the authorities had staked out a Washington house where they believed an antiwar group had made the bomb.

A Justice Department official said he knew of no such surveillance. And Chief James M. Powell of the Capitol police said: "It's all news to me. If so, I haven't been told."

Earlier today, Chief Powell told the Public Works subcommittee that "200 to 300 bomb threats" had been received at the Capitol in the last few years.

Even after yesterday's bombing, he said, six more threats were received and checked out. Referring to any evacuation of the buildings, he said: "If we had complied with instructions on all these threats, there wouldn't have been any Congress yesterday."

Chief Powell recommended that certain areas of the Capitol — such as out-of-the-way rooms and corridors — be off limits to tourists and that patronage jobs for the Capitol police be sharply curtailed.

The Capitol police force has an authorized strength of 622 men; there are now 575 on the force. Of these, the chief said, about 25 per cent are nonprofessionals, hired under patronage. Many of these are students working their way through college.

Signing In and Out

Chief Powell said that the police had been ordered to check all briefcases and large packages brought into the Capitol and office buildings by employees as well as tourists.

Early today, everyone had to sign in and out of the Rayburn House Office Building, but not at the other buildings or the Capitol. This procedure was dropped by noon.

The checking of parcels also varied from building to building. One photographer was ordered to empty his camera case. Policemen checking a par-

cel carried by a newspaper copy boy discovered nothing but two bologna sandwiches and an orange.

The subcommittee was also told today by the new architect of the Capitol, George M. White, that the explosion apparently did not "damage the structural integrity" of the Capitol.

The blast occurred in a first-floor lavatory separated from the Capitol's west outer wall by one room and a narrow corridor. Mr. White's predecessor, the late J. George Stewart, had contended that the West Front was so structurally weak that even the boom of an overhead jet plane might cause further wall damage.

The difficulties in protecting the Capitol were pointed up today by the Senate sergeant-at-arms, Robert G. Dunphy, who described the building as "just like a Swiss cheese—full of all kinds of tunnels and passages."

He noted that many Congressional staff members entering or leaving the Capitol buildings late at night had "protested vehemently" over signing in or signing out.

"Then the Senate itself is an offender, isn't it?" asked Senator Jennings Randolph, Democrat of West Virginia, who is chairman of the Public Works Committee. Senator Randolph was critical of the failure of the Capitol police to check guests attending night parties or other functions arranged by members of Congress.

"Perle Mesta checks on party crashers better than we do here," he said.