

Doctor's Report From Hanoi

MAY 1 1972

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Manchester Guardian

London

A new type of anti-personnel bomb dropped on Hanoi by American aircraft is causing severe medical problems for the North Vietnamese, according to a British consultant physician who has just returned from the northern capital.

Dr. Philip Harvey, who works at St. Stephen's Hospital in London, arrived in Hanoi on April 8 to carry out a medical education program at the invitation of the medical faculty at Hanoi University. A week after his arrival, on Sunday, April 16, 60 U.S. aircraft bombed the city, causing extensive dam-

age to eight residential districts.

Harvey said he visited one of the areas, about a kilometer from his city center hotel, and examined some of the dead and wounded. "I saw the body of one woman — she was pregnant — and she had been riddled with plastic pellets from an anti-personnel bomb. This is a new development. The pellets used to be metal but now that they are using plastic it is impossible to locate the pellets by normal X-rays. They can be found with the use of ultrasonic vibrations but the North Vietnamese do not have such equipment."

Harvey said that the pellets penetrate the victims

bodies at 1300 feet a second, creating such intense heat that they vaporize the flesh.

"They can fracture a bone without even making contact with it," he said. A full ultrasonic vibration unit costs about \$50,000 dollars. The wounded people seen by Harvey all had multiple penetrating wounds caused by cubic pellets.

The raid took place at about 9:30 in the morning, and involved three waves of 20 aircraft flying at about 25,000 feet. "It was impossible to see the planes," Harvey said, "though the sky was completely clear. I did see the vapor trails of the ground-to-air missiles being fired against them."

He said that six or seven

brick-built thatched houses had been destroyed in the area he visited. Two people were killed outright and eleven others injured, five seriously. Later two of the injured died and another two bodies were located in the ruins. The bombs dropped seemed to be an equal mixture of high explosive and anti-personnel. The latter, Harvey said, had no effect on property or structures. "I dug some pellets out of the brickwork and they had only gone in about a quarter of an inch."

The other areas attacked that morning were all within one or two kilometers of the city center. "It was a public holiday and the streets were teeming with people. At the

moment Hanoi has about five times the population for which it was originally designed. Later the authorities started evacuating women and children."

Harvey said that this was the only raid on the city while he was there — he left on Saturday (April 22) — though there had been one false alarm five days after the attack. "So far as I could tell the morale seemed to be remarkably high and they carried on with my program as though nothing had happened. It seemed to me that the bombing had much the same effect in Hanoi as it did in London during the blitz: It just strengthened people's determination to struggle on."