

South Viets Suffer Too, Clark Says Here

By Dick Alexander

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, describing the bombing of North Vietnam as "inhumane beyond description," said today he would go to South Vietnam if the occasion arose.

Clark, who arrived in San Francisco last night after a two-week visit to North Vietnam, told a news conference:

"You better believe we've hit dikes, sluices and canals." American B-52s are "killing little babies, women and old men. It's not only inhumane but stupid."

Suffering

Asked if he would go to South Vietnam to see if any women or children were being killed there by the North Vietnamese, he replied:

"There's no question that the suffering in South Vietnam exceeds the suffering in North Vietnam.

"Sure, I'm prepared to go to the South and see what I can see."

The former cabinet member said he was invited by North Vietnam by way of Stockholm and went as a private citizen.

He had a two-hour "bull session" with 10 U.S. prisoners of war and found them in "good health" and, in his judgment, "not brain-washed."

Clark repeated an earlier statement that he was informed by Hanoi there will be a full release of prisoners "when there is a full settlement."

He said one of the "greatest anxieties" of the POWs was that their families be informed they are in good health.

Clark said the big issues are the bombings and the prisoners.

"I saw hospitals bombed, churches destroyed . . . villages bombed by B52s . . . apartment buildings demolished."

Asked if he questioned the American prisoners about whether they bombed other than military targets before their capture, he replied:

Problems

"No, I wasn't interested in their views. I didn't want to create any problems" with their possible release.

He said a North Vietnamese mother would look you in the eye and say it is sad to lose a child — "but you don't want to lose them all, so you separate them."

In spite of that, he added, "on dozens of occasions, people went out of their way to say they love the American people.

"I thought they would hate my guts."

Declining to state unequivocally that Hanoi would re-

lease all prisoners when the bombing is stopped, Clark said Deputy Premier Trinh informed him he would guarantee return of all prisoners with a full settlement of hostilities.

Singers

He quoted Trinh as saying:

"Nixon is more interested in the fate of the Thieu government than the fate of the U.S. prisoners."

Describing North Vietnam as a singing country, Clark said: "I think they'll go down singing if we don't stop the bombing."

Meantime, the Pentagon refused comment today on Clark's statement that he had written assurances from Hanoi that American prisoners would be released when U.S. involvement in the war ended.

Defense Department spokesman Jerry Friedheim volunteered his own comments, however, of Clark's statements about POW treatment:

"He is, of course, a lawyer and a former attorney general who was part of the administration that sent half a million Americans to Vietnam. He was part of the administration during which many of those men became prisoners."

Clark, asked if his statements on the war would embarrass the present administration, replied:

"What embarrasses them is the truth."