

# Clark Testifies in Senate on Hanoi

## Washington

Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark testified yesterday that his talks in Hanoi showed no prospect for any significant release of American prisoners while U.S. bombing of North Vietnam continues.

Appearing before the Senate subcommittee on refugees, headed by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Dem.-Mass.), Clark clarified reports of his earlier remarks that of his prisoner release to the election of Senator George McGovern as President.

Many Republican spokesmen have pounced on Clark since he returned from Hanoi last weekend, charging that he was "duped."

## CHALLENGE

Senator Hiram L. Fong (Rep.-Hawaii), challenging Clark yesterday, asked if he had not said that if Senator McGovern is elected, North Vietnam would release the prisoners "immediately."

"No, I didn't say that," replied Clark. "I wish people would be more precise."

"My impression is that the chance of their releasing American pilots while there is American bombing of the North is nil, except for the symbolic release of one, two or three men."

## EDITOR

Clark put into a much more qualified context his previous references to what he said the editor of a North Vietnamese newspaper (whom he later identified as editor of the official journal, Nhan Dan) told him.

As Clark put it yesterday, the editor told him that if McGovern is elected "a few prisoners will be released." But "that was just an editor talking," Clark said.

He made it clear that senior North Vietnamese officials he spoke to were talking about a settlement of their standing demands as the condition for a general release of U.S. prisoners. These terms call for total U.S. disengagement from the war plus the end of U.S. support for South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu as major conditions.

## GOALS

In his testimony, the former attorney general in the Johnson administration emphasized that he had not gone to North Vietnam to concentrate on negotiating issues. He noted mild-manneredly about himself, "a guy who doesn't know any more than a former Marine corporal" is "no military ordnance man."

He said his visit was in search of truth: "I think it is very difficult to get the truth in America."

Clark displayed soft-spoken indignation about the bomb damage he said he observed to dikes, schools, hospitals, churches and homes in two weeks of travel in North Vietnam.

"You see Haiphong," he said, "and it reminds you of World War II. . . it took me back 26-27 years to things I would like to forget. . . you could hear the bombs every day in the distance."

"I can say from personal observation," said Clark, "that there is extensive damage being done to the dikes. . . right now." He said in one section alone "there must have been 50 craters," and the consequences are that "if they can't control the water, they are either going to starve or drown."

## FRAGS

Clark also displayed a small fragmentation bomb of the type that he said he was told are dropped in "mother bombs" containing "several hundreds" of bomblets which "throw shrapnel all over the place: They have one purpose — to kill people."

If this is what is happening, said Clark, "I know of no justification in law or humanity for the use of that weapon against civilian personnel."

While Senators Kennedy and Philip A. Hart (Dem.-Mich.), commended Clark's testimony, Senator Fong repeatedly challenged it. Fong

displayed three Defense Department photographs reported to have been taken July 24 and 29 in the Hanoi-Haiphong area with oil drums and military supplies reportedly alongside dikes.

Clark said he saw no guns, missiles or military supplies alongside or on any site he visited, and could only testify about what he observed in a two-week tour of the country.

"Rather than have the Department of Defense select three pictures to show," said Clark, he offered "hundreds of pictures" to the committee showing what he saw.

The Defense Department repeated its continuing denial yesterday that anti-personnel projectiles, such

as Clark testified about, or any other weapons, are aimed at civilian targets. When questioned about Clark's testimony, White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler replied, "I'm not going to be responsive to any questions regarding that man."

*Washington Post Service*