

Hanoi Is Reported Scarred But Key Services Continue

The following dispatch, which was delayed in transmission, was written by Telford Taylor, Professor of Law at Columbia University, who is visiting Hanoi with a group of Americans. Mr. Taylor, a retired brigadier general, was chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crimes trials and is the author of several books, including "Nuremberg and Vietnam: An American Tragedy."

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HANOI, North Vietnam, Dec. 22—After five days and nights of heavy bombing, Hanoi is badly scarred and half deserted but seems vigorous and in good spirits.

Despite the crippling of communications and utilities by hits on the central power plant, the railroad station and the airport, essential services have been maintained.

The airport terminal is completely wrecked and the main runway is damaged and villages near the airport have suffered badly.

Early this morning, the large Bach Mai Hospital was destroyed. The hospital grounds were torn by huge fresh craters and the buildings that escaped hits were shattered by blasts.

Viewed a few hours later, the hospital remains were a terrible scene, with rescue workers carrying patients piggyback, cranes and bulldozers and people using only their hands desperately clearing debris to reach victims said to be still buried in the rubble, and the frantic hospital director running from one building to another.

Some Areas Undamaged

Despite the severity of the bombing, Hanoi looks nothing like the Berlin or Hamburg of World War II. So far the bombing has been relatively concentrated in certain areas, and one can drive through the city for many blocks and see no damage whatever.

Most of the American bombers operate at high altitudes but occasionally a plane comes in low to avoid radar detection and lets go its load simultaneously with the sound of the sirens. Bursts of gunfire with no bombs or alerts mark the appearance of reconnaissance aircraft, which are said to be pilotless.

This afternoon, I was shown the remains of a large low-cost housing development in the An Duong district of Hanoi. Some

30 multiple-dwelling units covering several acres had suffered 20 or more hits leaving fresh bomb craters 50 feet in diameter and virtually total destruction of the homes.

The casualties in this housing area were said to be about 260, of which half were fatalities. Over-all figures on the number of killed and wounded in Hanoi are not available.

Shelters Are Effective

Air-defense discipline appears to be excellent and shelters, effective against anything but a direct hit, are numerous and well distributed. Yesterday afternoon, a bomb leveled several large buildings adjacent to the Cuban Embassy, but I was informed that everyone in the vicinity had taken shelter and that no one was killed, which seemed miraculous considering the scale of this destruction in the heart of the city.

Evacuation of the city began soon after the first bombing attacks; and was in full swing by today. By truck, pedicab, bicycle and on foot, families and individuals depart for the greener safety of the countryside. Street traffic and crowds have dwindled to a fraction of the volume observed during the weekend before the bombing began, and many shops are now closed and shuttered.

American airmen from planes shot down are shown at news conferences for the stated purpose of substantiating claims of planes destroyed. At the Hoa Binh Hotel near the center of the city, the guests, including Polish and Indian members of the International Control Commission and Cuban seamen marooned from ships in Haiphong Harbor, have spent many hours in the hotel's shelter.

Their enforced confinement has been brightened by the singing of Joan Baez, one of a group of Americans visiting North Vietnam to bring Christmas mail to American prisoners of war.