

# Newsmen in Hanoi Visit Street of Ruins

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Agence France-Presse

HANOI, North Vietnam, Dec. 28—One of Hanoi's most animated and colorful streets, Kham Thien, is a mass of ruins and a scene of desolation and mourning today in the wake of the latest series of American air raids.

I visited the street this morning with other journalists after we had learned of statements by the United States command in Saigon that American planes were not aiming at civilian targets.

Kham Thien and adjacent streets were "carpet bombed" by planes, including B-52's, that plowed up a strip nearly a mile long and several hundred yards wide.

On Kham Thien some houses still stand, but they are often without roofs or windows. Dozens of craters, some 12 yards in diameter and three yards deep, pock-mark the area.

### Station Already Bombed

Kham Thien Street was destroyed between Tuesday night and Wednesday morning.\*

The only "military objective" the journalists could see was the central railroad station, which had already been reduced to dust in a raid last week.

For the first time, North Vietnamese officials gave us figures for the attack on Kham Thien: 215 dead, 257 wounded. But these are provisional figures, because many other people have disappeared under the ruins.

A local official told us that the quarter had been hit by about 80 bombs of all kinds at 10:30 P.M. Tuesday, five minutes after sirens blared warnings of what was to be the most ferocious attack made against

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## NEWSMEN SHOWN STREET OF RUINS

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Hanoi. Five minutes to flee to the individual shelters that were to become tombs under the ruins and mud.

Kham Tien — the name means "Celestial Observatory" in Vietnamese — was one of the most lively and popular streets of Hanoi. Youths sang on the corners of the street packed with people.

### Many Are Evacuated

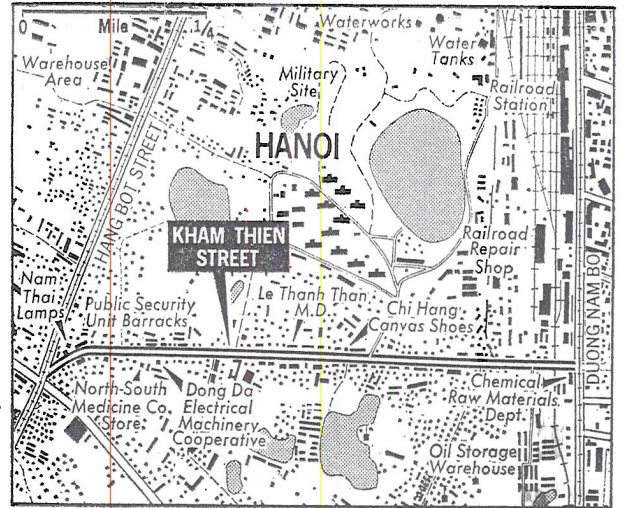
Journalists walked along this street a few days ago to visit a prison for American pilots, which was hit by United States bombs. At that time, the street was still animated by the little shops, the smiling faces of children, the crowds of cyclists and pedestrians.

According to the official, 5,158 families, or 28,198 people, lived in the stricken quarter. He added, however, that many of these had been evacuated to the countryside.

Walking through the quarter, we saw a fragmentation-bomb container near what remained of a wall from which three dusty red roses hung.

On a pile of ruins, an old woman held her hands to her face and chanted hauntingly, in near religious tone: "Oh, my son, where are you now? May I find you to bury you. Americans, how savage you are."

Her son was already buried there under the ruins into which his two adolescent



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brothers, bare to the waist, were digging with shovels, their faces impassive.

Further along, an entire family lay dead, their bodies pressed against each other—Nguyen Van Si, his wife, a young daughter, an adolescent boy, and a boy of 4 or 5 years grasping an infant against his chest.

In the distance, we could hear the squeals of a pig. At the entrance to the street, wooden coffins were piled up. A woman squatted on the ground, picking up rice, grain by grain. Near her stood her son, with the white turban of mourning around his head.

She asked him, "Son, were you able to wash your father's face?"

In another quarter, on the northwest edge of the city, the journalists saw other debris, including that of a wing of a B-52.

The plane had been shot down Wednesday night dur-

ing the 52d United States raid against Hanoi since Dec. 18. We had seen it coming down in flames, hit by a rocket before it had time to drop its bombs.

### No Comment by Pentagon

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28—

A Defense Department spokesman had no immediate comment today on reports of additional civilian casualties from the bombing of North Vietnam. He referred instead to earlier statements at Pentagon briefings.

Earlier this week at a press briefing, the spokesman, Jerry W. Friedheim, stressed that the planes seek only military targets. He said that while every effort was made to avoid civilian casualties, mistakes had happened, such as the bombing of the French Embassy in Hanoi on Oct. 11.

REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST!

\* 26-27 DEC 72