

Four U.S. POWs Tell of Damage

By Jean Leclerc du Sablon
Agence France-Presse

Hanoi

Four captured American airmen said here yesterday that they had seen devastated civilian areas of Hanoi which could not have been destroyed by falling North Vietnamese missile debris, a possibility cited in Washington.

The four, who were captured since the resumption of mass bombing of the north on December 18, said they had been shocked at the destruction they had seen during a tour of the areas and were surprised not to have seen any military targets.

They said the only reasons they could think of for the bombing of the civilian areas were panic by bomber pilots as they flew over Hanoi, "one of the best-defended areas in the world," and bad intelligence reports.

The airmen were presented to foreign re-

See Back Page

at being told that the U.S. Defense Department had described as propaganda the reports of bombing of civilian zones by U.S. planes.

SITES

Jefcoat said he and the other three had visited the site of the bomb-raided Bach Mai hospital and the devastated quarters of Kham Tien in central Hanoi and Mai Huong in the southern part of the city, where bombs destroyed a secondary school attended by 2000 children.

"There is no doubt in my mind," he said. "These areas were definitely hit by

bombs." He said he had seen bomb craters everywhere.

He added that it was also clear that the Bach Mai hospital had been bombed not just once, but several times.

He ruled out the possibility that these areas had only been hit by stray bombs.

STREETS

"We saw complete streets which had been leveled," Granger said.

Asked how they felt during their tour of the bombed areas, Conlee said he had felt "very sick at heart."

Jefcoat said the sight of

the destruction had been a "complete shock" and had left them all "extremely surprised because we could see no military targets" in the areas.

Yuill said that during their pre-mission briefings they had been told they were only going to bomb military targets.

DAMAGE

The damage they had seen in Hanoi was "incomprehensible," he said.

Jefcoat suggested that the American bomber pilots were "scared" as they flew over the heavily defended

From Page 1

reporters at Hanoi's International Club by North Vietnamese officials.

They were identified as Lieutenant Colonel William Walter Conlee, Major Carl Herbert Jefcoat, Lieutenant Paul Louis Granger and Lieutenant Colonel John Harry Yuill. Three of them were B-52 crewmen.

They said they had been picked at random to meet the press, and they answered the questions of this reporter without hesitation.

They expressed surprise

Hanoi region and that the intelligence report they carried with them were "poor."

At the end of the meeting of the airmen with the press, Jefcoat called on "our leaders" to reach a peaceful settlement of the war as quickly as possible and noted that continued bombing of the north could only strengthen the determination and feeling of unity among the North Vietnamese.

Finally, Granger deplored the fact there had been "so many innocent victims" as a result of the American bombing since December 18.