

Most POWs in 'Real Good' Shape

Clark Air Base, Philippines

Most U.S. war prisoners returned from North Vietnam are in "real good" condition and appear to have been well cared for, the doctor in charge of their medical treatment reported yesterday.

"Generally, the condition of the men is real good," said Colonel John W. Ord, commander of the Clark Air Base hospital where examinations have been given to the 142 POWs brought from North Vietnamese and Viet Cong prisons on Monday.

"That applies to their mental conditions and their physical conditions," Ord asserted at a news conference, adding that their care in North Vietnam "must have been good."

FOOD

Ord said the men apparently had been fed adequately, although they did not get "some of the things we take for granted as normal for our diet." All but 20 of the prisoners were placed on normal diets immediately upon their return and most have been eating three or four meals a day, he said.

Ord declined to comment on the quality of surgery done on the men or how many are suffering from chronic diseases.

He confirmed reports that

for the prisoners malaria was "about as common as catching a cold" and that at least half of the POWs had it at one time or another.

TREATMENT

"The doctors in North Vietnam who treated the men had given them some of the same durgs we use to treat malaria," he added.

Ord said the men were "ebullient and joyful" on their arrival at Clark. "The wards were pandemonium the day they arrived."

"The first thing one man did was to take both a bath and a shower," he said. "He took 45 minutes for both, using two kinds of shampoo and two kinds of soap."

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See Charles Howe,
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