

MERCY FLIGHTS TO DIEN.

This man has come back from hell; He and seven of his colleagues were in Dien Bien Phu when hordes of Viet Minh troops over-ran the jungle fortress. These eight men are the first of the grievously wounded to be flown by helicopter away from Dien to the French airstrip at Louang Prabang, following negotiations between the two sides.

Professor Huard is the chief French negotiator. Dakotas, painted the Red Cross, fly the men to base hospitals. Only troops whose wounds prevent them from fighting again are scheduled for evacuation from Dien Bien Phu. Meanwhile other Dakotas fly out to drop medical supplies into the fortress to aid the badly wounded of both sides.

Below is Dien Bien Phu. The airstrip (top right) is so badly damaged only helicopters can land. Parachutes lie scattered on the ground. At a hospital in Hanoi, the evacuated men are quickly attended to before being flown to France. Thousands of wounded still wait in Dien for the mercy air-lift. But the recent clash between Viet Minh and French delegates at Geneva may postpone the day when at last, they will all leave Dien Bien Phu - the fortress they defended so bravely until the very end.

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