

The 1600 Missing

POW Families in GG Rites

By James A. Finefrock

Sixteen hundred men trapped in a mine shaft or imperiled by radiation from a leaky nuclear reactor would become a news story of monumental proportions.

But the families of 1600 men who are missing in action or prisoners of war in Indochina are having a tough fight to publicize the plight of their fathers and husbands.

This was evident from the small turnout at a commemorative service yesterday marking the eighth anniversary of the first American

reported missing in Vietnam.

About 200 people gathered at the Golden Gate Bridge to watch a state-by-state roll call of the missing and imprisoned.

Sponsored by the National League of Families of POW/MIA, the ceremony was the final event of a national Week of Concern.

The service was held in the shadow of the bridge, Mrs. Maerose Evans said, in the hope that the bridge would become a symbol of concern.

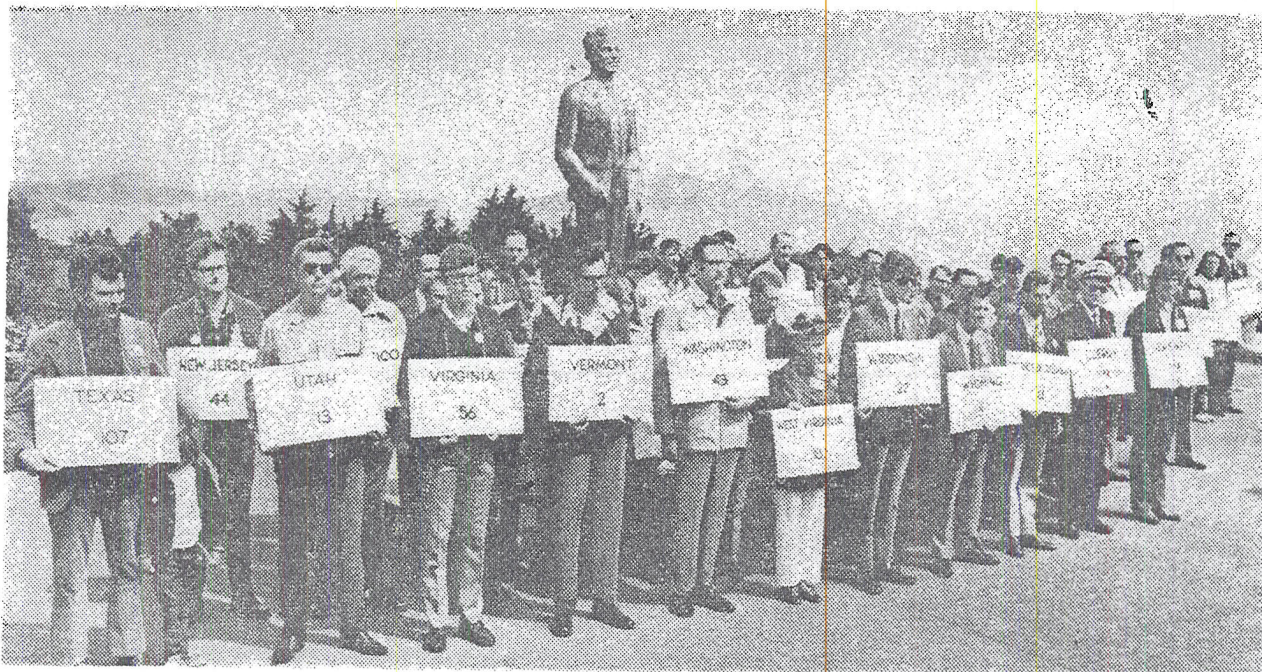
"It is the last thing many

of these men saw when they went overseas, and, hopefully, the first thing they will see when they return."

People at home forget there is still a war going on, said Mrs. Julie Butler, another POW wife, but it is very real to those held captive.

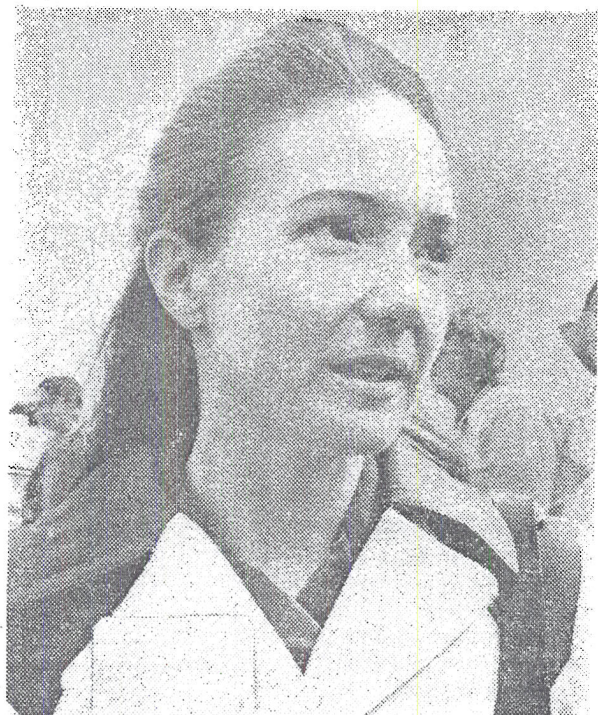
"The prisoners don't know what's going on in the outside world," she said.

Mrs. Butler has written to her husband, Capt. William Butler, a prisoner for over four years, at least once every month. She never knows whether her letters reach him.



POW relatives gathered yesterday near Golden Gate Bridge for a ceremony of concern. In back-

ground is statue of Joseph B. Strauss, engineer of the bridge.



MRS. JULIE BUTLER, A POW WIFE  
She writes, but do letters reach her husband?

—Examiner Photo