

PENTAGON TAKES DIM VIEW

3 POW Relatives to Fly to Hanoi

NEW YORK (UPI)—Relatives of three American prisoners of war will fly to North Vietnam this week for reunions in Hanoi with the POWs the North Vietnamese have promised to release, it was disclosed Saturday.

Antiwar activists Cora Weiss and David Dellinger announced at a news conference attended by eight relatives of the prisoners that, at the invitation of the North Vietnamese, one member of each family would leave for Hanoi Wednesday with them and the Rev. William Sloane Coffin.

(In Washington the Pentagon said in a statement, "The U.S. government does not think that it would be in the best interest of the United States or of all the POW-MIA (prisoner of war-missing in action) personnel for members of any of their families to enter North Vietnam at this time." The statement gave no reason and officials declined further comment.)

(It was not immediately known whether the government would move to block the Hanoi trip by the relatives.)

Mrs. Weiss and Dellin-

ger, co-chairmen of the Committee of Liaison with the families of American Servicemen Detained in Vietnam, arranged in Paris Sept. 2 for the release of Navy Lt. (j.g.) Markham L. Gartley, 28, captured in August, 1968; Navy Lt. (j.g.) Norris A. Charles, 27, captured Dec. 30, 1971, and Air Force Maj. Edward K. Elias, 34, captured last April.

Dellinger said the North Vietnamese had suggested in Paris that family members make the trip and "final confirmation came within the past 36 hours."

"I thought I could not be any happier than I was last Friday night" when the North Vietnamese announced they were releasing her son, Mrs. Minnie Lee Gartley of Dunedin, Fla., said.

But, she said, when she found out Friday night "that I was going to see him in a matter of days, it was unbelievable."

Mrs. Olga Charles of San Diego said she was "still in a state of shock with joy" over the prospect of seeing her husband and returning to the United States with him.

Dellinger said the Elias family had not yet decided who would go to Hanoi.

But Barney Elias of Jacksonville, Ill., offered the "deepest and most heartfelt appreciation from my family and myself, first to God, and next to North Vietnam" for the release of his son.