

# Bay Area Wives Of POWs Critical

Wives of two long-time prisoners of war in North Vietnam today characterized the current release of three others as merely a token designed for propaganda purposes.

North Vietnam must not be

allowed to think she is fooling us by such tokenism," the women said at a press conference in San Francisco.

They are Mrs. William Butler of San Rafael, mother of two, whose 31-year-old Air Force pilot husband has been held since November, 1967, and Mrs. Richard Stratton, Palo Alto, mother of three, whose Navy commander husband has been a prisoner since January, 1967.

Both women have been active in seeking better treatment and release of the POWs.

In a prepared statement as a preface to the press conference, they said:

"We welcome the returned POWs and rejoice for their families; however, we must emphasize that once again no consideration has been given to our sick and wounded or long term prisoners."

Mrs. Butler accused the North Vietnamese of playing "a cat and mouse game" by releasing a few prisoners occasionally and she pointed out that it would take until the year 2080 to get all the men released at the present rate.

"Constant publicity and highlighting the problem is the only way to get the men out," Mrs. Butler said.

Mrs. Stratton said her husband at one time told other prisoners about to be released to "go ahead and tell what's happening. It will mean more torture, but at least we'll know what we're being tortured for."