

# Two POW Wives Back U.S. Action

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By George Murphy

Two Bay Area wives of American prisoners of war said here yesterday that they believe the military acted correctly in taking the three released POWs to military hospitals.

"Absolutely," said Mrs. Richard Stratton, of Palo Alto, whose husband, a Navy commander, has been a POW since January, 1967.

"When the last three were released three years ago, I knew almost as soon as they reached New York what my husband's condition was. They (the military) called me at home."

Mrs. William Butler, of San Rafael, whose husband, an Air Force captain was captured in November, 1967, added, "That's how I learned my husband was alive, when they called me."

## CONFERENCE

The women, members of the National League of Families, made their comments at a crowded press conference.

Mrs. Stratton compared the receipt of information about her husband three years ago with the recent release, saying:

"Can you imagine how the families feel, watching this charade day by day, and wondering how much information about the other prisoners is slipping out of their minds?"

Mrs. Butler said past experiences with released POWs shows "information

about the camps escapes their minds very quickly, once they get to the outside world, so the quicker they can be de-briefed, the better for the rest of us."

## COMMITTEE

The women characterized the Committee of Liaison, the anti-war group that accompanied the three POWs back to this country, as "a tool of the North Vietnamese," and not responsible for the release of the prisoners at all.

They added, in a statement:

"The last three POWs released elected to expose the true conditions of their confinement."

Mrs. Stratton said those prisoners talked with their comrades, among them her husband, and said, "My husband told them to go ahead and tell the true conditions. If we get tortured for it, at least this time we'll know why we're being tortured."

## RELEASE

The women noted, "This release comes right before our election.

"Hanoi says it is a gesture of good will; however, the time and method of this release indicate to us something more than good will.

"... North Vietnam must not be allowed to think she fools us by such tokenism. We will continue to ask about the condition of the rest of the POWs and for information about the missing."



MRS. STRATTON AND MRS. BUTLER  
'Information about other prisoners slips their minds'