

# POW Wives' Divorce Views

By Susan Berman

Prisoner of war wives in the Bay Area don't blame Tangee Alvarez for her decision to divorce her POW husband, Lt. Cmdr. Everett Alvarez Jr., and to remarry, but they won't follow her lead.

"I love my husband too much to divorce him," said Mrs. Sandra Bors, wife of USAF Major Joseph C. Bors, who has been missing in action since April, 1968.

All the Bay Area wives interviewed are content to play the arduous waiting game, saying they have faith that someday they will be reunited with their husbands. When the going gets rough, they turn to other military families for solace and hope.

Sandra Bors, who lives with her twelve-year-old twins, Anne and Loe, in Mountain View, has had no word of her husband for over four years.

"It's a private hell, but you just keep on hoping. I've recently taken a job

at the Veterans Administration so that I am not as full of anxiety," Mrs. Bors said.

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Mrs. Alice Stratton, wife of Lt. Cmdr. Richard Stratton of the US Navy, has even a harder lot. Heartbreaking pictures of her husband, shot down and taken prisoner in January, 1967, have been released by the North Vietnamese.

Alice met her husband — then stationed at Alameda — when she was a 24 year old social worker in the City.

"We knew immediately that we wanted to get married. The same things were important to both of us, our Catholic religion, raising a family, we had a lot in common," the now 38 year old Mrs. Stratton remembers.

Four months after they met, they were married.

"He was patriotic and wanted to be a career Navy man. He had graduated from Stanford University and joined the

Navy because he loved to fly. Just before he was shot down, we discussed the possibility that he might get out of the Navy because the separation was so hard on the children," she said.

"The opportunity for that choice never came. Mrs. Stratton is allowed to write one short letter every two months to her husband and occasionally to send 6½ pound packages.

"I sent him 86 pictures of the family last year and he got two. I send aspirin, vitamins, food, anything he wants. And I get occasional letters back. He talks about the children, the plans he has for them, the lessons he wants them to take. I can just hope that the war ends and he is released soon," Mrs. Stratton said.

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Mrs. Karen Roach is only 19. She met her husband Marion when she was 14, married him when he was on R and R in Hawaii when she was 16. Marion "Lee" Roach's helicopter was downed November 4, 1969, five

months after he had been married.

"We were only together six days as a married couple," says Karen, who now lives in Redding and attends Shasta College.

"I wear a POW bracelet on my arm with his name on it, and I've written to everybody I could think of to get information about him but I have heard nothing."

"I do go out occasionally but I tell my dates I am married. And I think even if I found someone else, I could never divorce Marion. I just wouldn't do that to him," Karen said.

Mrs. Joan Profitet celebrated her 18th wedding anniversary this year. Alone. Her husband, U.S. Navy Captain Leo Profitet, has been missing in action since 1967 and has been declared a POW. Joan lives in Palo Alto with their four children.

"I first found out Leo was alive in 1970, three years after he had been shot down," Joan said. "Now I have heard from him, he's very firm on the point that all the children go to college. Our youngest, Leo Jr., is 14. He was only nine when Leo was shot down."

She is 40 now, her husband is 45. She says she doesn't blame Tangee Alvarez in any way for what she did. That it is a decision each woman must make for herself.

Mrs. Profitet worked for awhile as a travel agent but decided to quit so she could spend more time with her children. She said:

"I couldn't think of divorcing Leo. I just don't rise and fall anymore when I hear news. I won't get my hopes up that he will be released until I see the whites of his eyes."





LT. CMDR. Richard Stratton  
and wife, Alice.



MAJOR Joseph Bors, wife Sandra



CAPTAIN Leo Profilat, his wife Joan

