

P.O.W. Kin in Tri-State Area Rejoice

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NYT

By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN

At 7:30 Saturday evening a Casualty Assistance Calls Officer from the Department of Defense phoned the home of Mrs. Loyal Goodermote to tell her that the name of her son, Wayne K. Goodermote, a Navy lieutenant, was included in the list of prisoners of war issued by North Vietnam.

Mrs. Goodermote, who last saw her 29-year-old son seven years ago, had been waiting for the news. He had been shot down on Aug. 13, 1967, but two and a half years passed from that date before she heard any word from him. Then in 1970 came a letter carried out by American peace group representatives, six lines saying he was alive.

There were no letters in 1971. Then for a while early last year there was one a month, but they stopped in April. The last letter came two weeks ago. Mrs. Goodermote, who lives in Berlin, in upstate Rensselaer County, said in that letter that her son had written he was "sorry he wasn't home."

Packages Returned

In a few of his letters, said the mother yesterday, Lieutenant Goodermote mentioned that he was in good health, although in others he asked for medical supplies. She sent these in monthly packages, most of which were returned.

In the first letters that the lieutenant sent home he would write of wanting to study architecture when he returned. The last letter, though, said that he felt he was too old to begin the six-year course of study for architecture and asked his mother to look into a course in civil engineering. Lieutenant Goodermote is a graduate of the University of Rochester.

At home there were changes, too. Lieutenant Goodermote's wife obtained a divorce and remarried, and his mother had to write to tell him that two years ago. The couple had no children.

Memorial Services Held

Mrs. Goodermote said that after the news last night that her son was on the prisoner-of-war list, while not unexpected, was gratifying. After she heard from the Department of Defense, she and her husband, a building contractor, went to a memorial service sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

It was, she said, a solemn occasion, and along with the news of her son's status, it eased the tension, which, she said, had mounted amid indications that the war was stopping.

"I felt more frustrated in Goodermote said. "We began to feel strongly that our involvement was a mistake and could see that nothing good was going to come out of continuing the conflict."

Now, she says, she still feels some tension. She has not had any word just when

her son might be coming home or where he will land.

"We don't know if he'll be among the first. We just have to keep on waiting."

Lieutenant Goodermote was one of at least 13 men from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut on the list of American prisoners of war. For many names on the list, no home towns were given.

In the homes of the men known to be from the tristate area, thanks, hope and anxiety were evident yesterday.

First Official Word

Joy was particularly apparent at the Neptune, N.J., home of the parents of Robert I. Randall, a Navy lieutenant whose appearance on the list was the first official indication that he was alive.

Neighbors of the Randalls said that they were informed on Saturday evening and that they jubilantly told the good news to the neighborhood. Yesterday morning they set off to

Contact With Prisoners Is Ruled Out at Clark

Special to The New York Times

CLARK AIR BASE, Philippines, Jan. 28 — Military spokesmen here today ruled out all public comment by returning prisoners of war until a week or more after they have been turned over to United States military authorities by North Vietnam.

"No interviews with returnees will be possible while they are processing through the Pacific theater," Col. Mike Connelly, assistant director of public relations for Operation Homecoming, said today.

The only public contact the former prisoners will have with civilians will be what they can see while getting on and off airplanes that will ferrying them from Hanoi to Clark, and then later to Travis Air Force Base, California, and military hospitals throughout the United States. Including flying time, and stopovers for fuel, briefings and physical examination, this process is estimated to take a week or more.

visit their son's wife, Jane, and the couple's 3-year-old daughter at their home in Norfolk, Virginia.

Reached by telephone, Mrs. Randall said the news given to her by the Department of Defense confirmed her "inner feeling that Robert was O.K. and safe."

She had last heard from him last year in a letter dated July 8. Then came official notification that on July 11 the F-4 he was piloting had been shot down and her husband was listed as missing in action.

A Hint in Newspaper

Mrs. Randall said, however, that on the day after Election Day last November, Navy officials showed her a North Vietnamese newspaper that said Robert Randall and the radar intercept officer of his plane, Lieut. Frederick J. Masterson, were either captured or seen running after ejecting from their downed plane. She believed that if he was running, he must have avoided injury or wounds, and that flimsy intelligence sustained her faith until Saturday's confirmation.

Mrs. Randall said she celebrated the news with Navy friends who live nearby, toasting her husband's fortune in champagne.

Later Lieutenant Masterson's girlfriend visited Mrs. Randall. She too, had learned that Lieutenant Masterson's name was on the list.

"We both cried," said Mrs. Randall. "I guess it was getting harder as the days wore on, because I was getting scared. I knew I was going to be finding out, and even though I had the feeling he was all right, I was growing uncertain."

Mr. and Mrs. John B. Coker of Linden, N.J., had received nine letters from their son George during the nearly seven years he had been a prisoner. The first one, which came almost four years after his capture, said simply, "I'm alive."

With one exception, the others that followed, said Mrs. Coker, were all limited to six lines, the maximum he was allowed. She said her son, a Navy lieutenant, had received three or four letters from home and two packages while a prisoner.