

# A Plan to Give POWs a Color TV

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## San Diego

An elaborate fund-raising scheme to give each returning prisoner of war a new car, a color TV set and an all-expenses-paid two-week holiday for two anywhere in the United States is under fire by the National League of Families of POW and MIA, it was learned yesterday.

Promoter of the plan is Welcome Home Our Prisoners, Inc., headquartered here, a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation, which for months has been soliciting support and contributions from major corporations and prominent figures in the worlds of entertainment, sports, politics, labor and business.

Listed as members of its advisory board on the organization's stationery are

Hank Aaron and Lee Trevino, Governors Ronald Reagan of California, Reubin Askew of Florida, George Wallace of Alabama, Senators Alan Cranston and John Tunney of California.

Also Bob Hope, Lucille Ball, Frank Sinatra, John Wayne, George Meany and many others of similar stature.

At the National League of Family's headquarters in Washington, D.C., Helene Knapp, national coordinator, said letters expressing league opposition to the plan have been sent to those identified as members of the organization's advisory board.

"While we appreciate your concern for our men who are missing and held captive we do not believe the wel-

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come home POW's program is in the best interest of our returning POW's and their families.

"And we are fearful that it could serve to undermine the interests of men who are still missing.

"Naturally, any decision you make concerning further support for this organization is yours alone. But our board of directors would hope in light of our action you would want to reconsider your decision to participate in this program.

"May we hear from you in this regard."

## HUSBAND

Mrs. Knapp, whose husband is listed as missing in action, said the letters were signed by Phyllis Galanti,

league chairman, and herself.

Reached by telephone here, Roger Chapin, founder and president of Welcome Home Our Prisoners, said he had not yet reached a decision to go through with the program.

Letters sent to individuals, firms and organizations by Chapin, beginning last summer invited participation in a "magnificent homecoming welcome we are now preparing."

He said the objective was "to provide the vehicle by which all America can most meaningfully express its heartfelt sentiments to our POW's."

## POW

When the POW's returned they should be greeted during a national "welcome

home our prisoners week," he said in the letters.

"We believe that such an outpouring of goodwill will not only be tremendously appreciated by the men and their families but it will represent a key step forward in what for many of them will be a difficult process of rehabilitation," he wrote.

"It will immediately dispel all the fears and doubts caused by the long years of indoctrination, isolation and Communist propaganda designed to convince the prisoners that they had been forsaken by their countrymen."

Chapin explained in an accompanying fact sheet that when a firm release date for POW's is announced, "we will launch a nationwide drive to amass a giant POW gift fund."