

# The Civilians Who Were Freed

By Kevin Leary

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Solano county

DARLENE Cunningham stayed home by her telephone all day yesterday nervously awaiting a call from her brother, James U. Rollins, a civilian who had been held captive by the Viet Cong for five years.

She had been glued to the television for two days waiting for her 36-year-old brother to appear as a free man.

There was an 11-hour delay in the release of prisoners held in South Vietnam, and Mrs. Cunningham went to bed crying with disappointment and anxiety at 5 a.m.

But two hours later, she

was back at the TV, and saw her brother walk from the plane that brought the prisoners from Saigon to the Philippines.

"He looked real, real thin, and they say he has some kind of heart problem," she said, "but considering everything he looked pretty damned good to me."

Finally, the call came through at 9 o'clock last night.

Mrs. Cunningham's joy was only slightly dampened when her brother said he would be kept in the Philippines another ten days or so while doctors treat him for the diseases he picked up in the jungle.

"He was elated, though," Mrs. Cunningham said happily. "He was feeling real good and he said the military was treating him like a king."

She was reluctant to answer questions about her brother's treatment as a Viet Cong prisoner.

Rollins, an American painting contractor with R M K-B R J Construction Company in Saigon, was captured Feb. 5, 1968, at the beginning of the Tet offensive.

Mrs. Cunningham, who lives here with her husband, Bill, and two teen-age children, said she is the only real family her brother has.

Their three-bedroom bungalow will be crowded, she said, but she is fixing up a room for her brother "and he'll stay here with us as long as he wants to."

Another of the eight civilian prisoners released in South Vietnam yesterday is from the Bay Area, Richard George Waldhaus, 25, of Pittsburg.

His mother, Mrs. George F. Waldhaus said yesterday that she knew very little about her son's homecoming. At his own request, Waldhaus remained in an army hospital in South Vietnam yesterday.