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**RELEASED CIVILIAN
NOW COMING HOME**NYTimes FEB 16 1973
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Feb. 15—Richard G. Waldhaus, the American prisoner who remained in Vietnam after his release by the Vietcong Monday, left today for home, the United States Embassy reported.

It said in a statement that Mr. Waldhaus, the only former prisoner who was neither a member of the armed forces nor, officers said, a United States Government employe, had "chosen to return to the United States, where he expects to be reunited with members of his family."

American sources said Tuesday that he had asked to remain because he had a girlfriend in Saigon.

Officials would not disclose Mr. Waldhaus's destination, nor would they elaborate on the announcement, which said that "every effort has been made to insure the well-being and adjustment of Mr. Waldhaus to his new surroundings, as has been done with the other former prisoners."

Mr. Waldhaus, 25 years old, had listed his home town as Pittsburg, Calif. American sources have described him as a hippie and a wanderer who was captured by the Communists in August, 1971, between Saigon and the Cambodian border.