

# 'Flower Power'



By Dave Randolph

DOROTHEA WALDHAUS AND HER RETURNED POW SON, RICHARD  
Puzzling and barely audible phrases at the San Francisco airport

## Bay Area POW Brings Home His Mystery

By Kevin Leary

Richard G. Waldhaus, the mysterious prisoner of the Viet Cong who refused to return to the United States when he was

freed last Monday, came home yesterday and remained a mystery.

He possibly is the only man returning from captivity in Vietnam who did not

have any sound reason for being there in the first place.

The 25-year-old civilian from Pittsburg in Contra Costa county had been held captive in the jungles of South Vietnam for the past year and a half.

He was captured by Viet Cong guerrillas Aug. 4, 1971, while he was riding a bus from Saigon to Cambodia, through Communist-held territory.

### UNKNOWNNS

It has not been clearly explained why he was in Vietnam as a civilian at that time or where he was going on the bus.

Some reports say he had met a Vietnamese girl in Binh Duong province, north of Saigon, when he served as an Army medic. And he was reportedly going back to see her.

When he was released this week with eight other civilian prisoners and 19 servicemen, Waldhaus refused to leave the country until he found a certain Vietnamese girl.

### SUCCESS

After a few days of searching the war-ravaged countryside with the help of the U.S. Embassy, Waldhaus and the girl met at the Army's Third Field Hospital on the outskirts of Saigon.

The two spoke alone together for a short while, then Waldhaus left Saigon alone on a Pan American jet for the 9000-mile flight to San Francisco International Airport.

Clad in black pajamas and a cloth shawl, barefoot and holding a pink carnation, Waldhaus spoke briefly, if not coherently, to the press at the airport yesterday.

"I bring you my love and all my people's love," he said in a whisper barely audible three feet away.

"It's the reunification of the country, the world, the universe," he told two dozen puzzled newsmen most of whom could not hear the pale young man and, if they heard him, could not understand what he said.

### STATEMENT

"Peace has come to Vietnam," he whispered waving the flower. "We've brought it together, we call it communion, that's flower power.

"We don't call it communism, capitalism, socialism or imperialism — we call it communion.

"All power to the people," he said as he was led away from the banks of microphones and the glare of television lights.

Dorothea Waldhaus, his mother, then said:

"He is in no physical or mental condition to see anyone. Seeing him has given me such a shock I can hardly speak.

"I didn't even recognize him. He used to have a round chubby face, now it's long and thin," said Mrs. Waldhaus.

"Please don't bother us, we just want to be left alone," she said in a quavering voice.