

Officials reported that the 19 prisoners of war released from North Vietnam on Sunday [18 Feb] are in such good health that some could fly to the United States on Tuesday or Wednesday morning [20, 21 Feb] at the latest; one has already left for this country to be with an ailing father.

Reporters were permitted a 15-minute barracks interview with six of the POWs today. Most of them spoke of wives, plans of getting married and things they missed while prisoners. The interviews with the six newly-released men were among the few granted reporters since the POWs started coming out of Vietnam last week. Ground rules were strict, the AP says. Questions were limited to events since the men's release or non-controversial areas of prison life. Each interview was monitored by a military information officer who did not hesitate to cut off any answer he judged out of line. Details on prison camp organization, prison conditions, the actions that gave the men hope or despair in their years of imprisonment thus were not available.