



UPI Telephoto

Air Force Captain Cynthia Chang supervised the preparation and service of the POW's first meal

SFChronicle MAR 5 1973

All They Could Eat

Clark Air Base, Philippines

Returning American prisoners of war cast aside their prison diets of pumpkin soup and banana peel stew yesterday for American steak and eggs, fried chicken, corn on the cob and extra helpings of ice cream sundaes.

The 106 freed POWs had their first American meal in more than five years within an hour of their arrival from

Hanoi in the cafeteria of the Clark Air Base hospital. All will live at the modern, 270-bed hospital until their flights back to the U.S. sometime this week, probably after two or three days.

One POW said his fried egg was "beautiful." Another devoured a banana split made with chocolate, strawberry and vanilla ice cream, topped with marshmallow and chocolate sauce, nuts

and a cherry and said, "That's the greatest thing I've had to eat in 6½ years."

Many of the men downed two and three of the ice cream delights and drank glass after glass of milk.

Navy Commander Richard Stratton, 41, of Palo Alto, Calif., a prisoner since Jan. 5, 1967, told one photographer he ate a dozen eggs.

Another ex-prisoner told Air Force Captain Cynthia

Chang, 24, of Honolulu, Hawaii, one of the hospital's dietitians, "You set a nice table, Cynthia."

Hospital dietitians reported prisoners released earlier told them their prison diets included pumpkin and squash soups, some greens, and a stew made out of leftovers, pork fat and bananas sliced with their skins still on.

United Press