

Son Tay POWs, Commandos

By Dick Alexander

The prisoners of Son Tay have a rendezvous in San Francisco next weekend with the daring American commandos who — in disregard for their own safety — dropped into a darkened North Vietnamese prison camp in 1970 in a futile rescue attempt.

And, although the Son Tay prisoners had been removed to another camp several weeks earlier, all 66 are expected to be here Friday and Saturday for the first-time meeting they asked in San Francisco.

The City is going all out to welcome some 150 couples — the ex-prisoners, the Green Berets and Air Force volunteers, and their wives.

H. Ross Perot, the Texas billionaire and philanthropist, is picking up the tab for flying the men and their wives here where they will be quartered at the Fair-

The Route Of Parade

Here is the route for the noon parade Friday honoring the Son Tay prisoners and the Green Beret-Air Force rescue team.

Leave from the assembly area at California and Drumm Streets, up California to Montgomery Street, left on Montgomery to Post Street where the parade will disband.

The POWs and raiders will take a right turn at Sutter Street and go to the Hilton Hotel for the Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

mont Hotel for a two-day celebration.

Friday's events will begin with a noon ticker tape parade through the financial

district, to be followed by a 1 p.m. public luncheon at the Hilton Hotel's Imperial Ballroom.

For tickets, contact Lex Byers at the Greater San Francisco Chamber of Commerce.

Planners are attempting to get actor John Wayne for master of ceremonies.

On Friday night, the men and their wives will dine at the Fairmont and be guests of hotelman Ben Swig for the midnight show in the Venetian Room, featuring The Supremes.

From noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, the raiders and ex-POWs will get together and just "talk," while their wives go shopping or on a tour of San Francisco and Sausalito, courtesy of Gray Line Tours.

A sunset, two-hour cruise of San Francisco Bay for the entire party is scheduled for



LEROY MANOR
Rescue planner

5 p.m. to 7 p.m., hosted by Harbor Tours.

Saturday night will be "free time."

The former POWs, now at various U.S. military hospitals, chose San Francisco for their meeting with the Berets and Air Force volunteers who made up the spe-

to Meet Here



RENDER CRAYTON
Senior commander

Crayton, senior commander of Son Tay who was shot down in February, 1966 and released in March, 1973.

- Air Force Col. Robertson Risner, an F105 pilot who was shot down in September, 1965.

- Adm. James B. Stockdale, a senior prison camp commander whose wife, Sybil, was a key organizer of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Action in Southeast Asia.

- Col. Arthur B. "Bull" Simons, U.S. Army retired, who was leader of the raid into Son Tay.

- Lt. Cmdr. John S. McCain III, prisoner and son of Admiral McCain, commander in charge of running the war in the Pacific.

- Air Force Brig. Gene Leroy Manor, planner of the rescue attempt and veteran of 345 combat missions in World War II and Vietnam.

cial commando group.

Perot, the 42-year-old computer whiz, wishes to remain in the background and may not attend. But an assistant, Tom Meurer, told The Examiner the two-day rendezvous will include these participants:

- Navy Cmdr. Render

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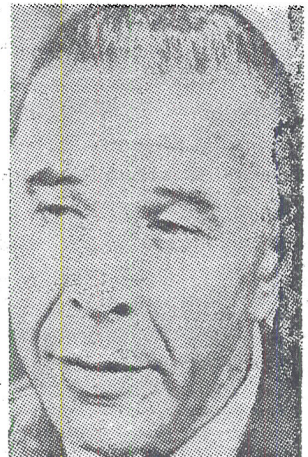
'It Was Worth It,' Says Raiders' Chief

"If the chance was one in ten of getting the men out, it was worth it," said retired Army Col. Arthur B. "Bull" Simons who led the abortive raid into the Son Tay prison camp in North Vietnam on Nov. 21, 1973.

"It was very worthwhile," the 54-year-old commander said by phone from his "little farm" near Defuniak Springs, Fla.

"It was something every one of those men wanted to do very badly. "It was unlike many military operations. I don't think it was just a professional thing to do. It was something I wanted to do very badly."

Col. Simons, who is expected to attend the first meeting of the ex-POWs of Son Tay and their would-be rescuers here next weekend, said the important part of the raid was over in 12 minutes.



ARTHUR SIMONS
Raid leader

Navy Cmdr. Render Crayton, senior commander of the 66 Son Tay prisoners, described the rescue attempt as a "tremendous morale boost to know there were men willing to risk their lives to rescue us."