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EDISON MILLER WALTER WILBER
Mutiny and misconduct charges dropped

Formal Censure

No Court-Martial For 2 Ex-POWs

Washington

Secretary of the Navy John W. Warner dismissed mutiny and other misconduct charges against two former war prisoners yesterday but formally censured them for "failing to meet the standards expected of officers."

Warner said evidence collected in a three-month investigation warranted further legal steps that might have led to courts-martial for Navy Captain Walter E. Wilber and Marine Lieutenant Colonel Edison W. Miller, the highest ranking servicemen yet accused of misconduct while prisoners of the North Vietnamese.

But the Navy Secretary decided it was more important to spare other former POWs "the disruptive effects of such proceedings."

As he announced letters of censure, Warner said that Wilber, 43, of Columbia Cross Roads, Pa., and Miller, 42, of Newport Beach, Calif., will be retired "in the best interests of the naval service."

REQUEST

Even before Warner acted, Wilber had requested retirement and Miller, granted 60 per cent disability, was getting out of the service on medical grounds, a Pentagon spokesman acknowledged. Both men have served in uniform more than 20 years and are entitled to retirement with pay.

Warner's action leaves charges pending against

four Army and Marine Corps enlisted men accused of misconduct while POWs. Charges against them were dropped once, but new charges were filed against them in July.

The allegations against Wilber and Miller were filed by Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, who was a senior POW during the years in which they were in captivity.

'ADEQUATE'

After Warner's decision was announced, the Navy quoted Stockdale as saying that the censure and impending retirement of Wilber and Miller "adequately serve the cause of justice."

Lieutenant General Daniel James, a Pentagon spokesman, told a briefing that Warner's move is the final action in the Miller-Wilber cases.

The specific details included in Stockdale's charges have never been made public and James said they will not be disclosed.

Warner stressed that his decision followed an "extensive personal review" in which he interviewed 19 former POWs who have never been made public.

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