

POWS

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2 Ex-POWs Fault U.S. On Sontay Camp Raid

Toronto, Dec. 17 (AP) - Two American pilots who were prisoners of war in North Vietnam say they believe the U.S. government knew there were no prisoners in the Sontay POW camp before the American commando raid there in 1970.

Capt. Walter Eugene Wilber of Columbia Cross Roads, Pa., said in an interview over Canadian television that he was told the camp was emptied three or four months before the raid.

He and Col. Edison Wainwright Miller of Newport Beach, Calif., said U.S. spy planes flew over over every few days and must have seen that the camp was deserted.

"The only other obvious conclusion would be that our intelligence was sadly inept," Miller said. "The raid had been planned and it was just executed regardless. I think President Nixon probably needed some favorable publicity."

Miller and Wilber were the only POW officers who after their release were charged with misconduct by their senior camp officers. The Pentagon dropped the charges.

See also "More Dirty Work," by Stuart H. Loory, NYTimes 27 Aug 73, this file.

On Miller and Wilber, see this file 22 Jun 73 et seq.
On Sontay raid, see this file 24 Nov 70 et seq.