

Divorce Law in California Angers 6½-Year P.O.W.

FOSTER CITY, Calif., Dec. 17 (AP)—Lieut. Col. Robert Lewis Stirm says California's no-fault divorce law apparently wasn't intended for prisoners of war.

"The Family Law Act has taken me to the cleaners," Colonel Stirm said in an article in The San Francisco Examiner. California law presumes both partners shared in a community up until the date of separation.

"I haven't shared in a community for 6½ years. I was sitting in that rotten stinking hole. All those dreams I had in prison were nothing but dust," he said.

Colonel Stirm is an Air Force officer who spent 6½ years in a North Vietnamese prison and returned to a wife who wanted a divorce.

At Travis Air Force Base on St. Patrick's Day, Colonel Stirm's family greeted him with hugs and screams of joy. But two months later, Loretta—his wife of 18 years—filed for divorce.

A Hint by Telegram

Colonel Stirm said he got his first hint that the reunion would not be quite as he envisioned it when he was given a telegram from his wife at Clark Air Base in the Philippines.

"I have changed drastically—forced into a situation where I had to finally grow up," the message read in part. "Bob, I feel sure that in your heart you know we can't make it together."

Mrs. Stirm would not discuss the situation.

The Stirms are separated, but both live in the bayside community of Foster City south of San Francisco.

In her dissolution petition, Mrs. Stirm said they separated May 5. Colonel Stirm's lawyer contends that the date should be set much earlier, when Mrs. Stirm began dating.

In a court deposition, Mrs. Stirm said she has discussed marriage with a San Mateo attorney and had taken trips with him, some at his expense.

Court records show that Mrs. Stirm received \$128,671.55 in military pay and allotments while her husband was a P.O.W. At issue in the divorce case are what constitutes com-

munity property and how much his wife is entitled to.

The Stirms have four children—Lorrie, 16; Robert Jr., 14; Roger, 13, and Cindy, 11.

The Proceedings In the U.N. Today

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Meets at 10:30 A.M. and 3 P.M.
Administrative and Budgetary Committee—10:30 A.M.

Tickets may be obtained at the public desk, main lobby, United Nations Headquarters.
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