

## Freed Pilots Arrive in Laos

VIENTIANE, Laos (AP) — Three American pilots, the first U.S. airmen to be freed after capture in North Vietnam, arrived here Friday night after their release in Hanoi. One of the officers, speaking for the group, said he was well, but "physically a little weary" and "emotionally overcome."

The fliers were flown on to the big U.S. Air Force base at Udorn, Thailand, where the Pentagon reported they underwent physical examinations.

Two American critics of U.S. Vietnam policy who served as go-betweens in securing the fliers' release and accompanied them to Vientiane from Hanoi, accused William Sullivan, U.S. ambassador to Laos, of using "heavy language" to convince the men to go to Udorn instead of returning directly to the United States.

Sullivan did not comment on the charge.

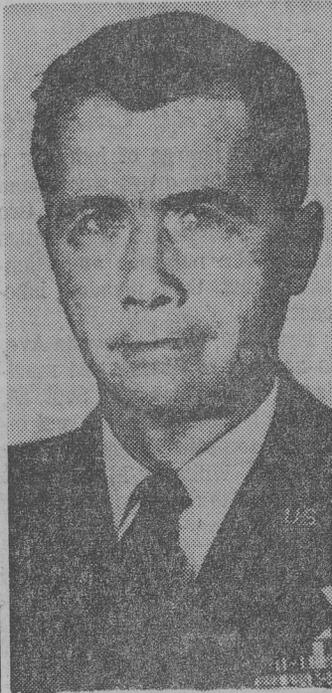
The officers are Maj. Morris Overly, 39, of Detroit, Capt. Jon David Black, 30, of Johnson City, Tenn., and Lt. David Matheny, 23, of South Bend, Ind.

Captured American soldiers have been released by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese but the Communists had never previously freed airmen who flew bombing missions over the north.

The pilots arrived in Vientiane aboard an International Control Commission plane. With them were the Rev. Daniel Ber-

(Turn to Page 4A, Column 2)

reporter telegraphed 17 Feb 68



**CAPTURED U.S. PILOTS RELEASED** — Capt. Jon D. Black of Johnson City, Tenn., and Maj. Norris M. Overly of Detroit, both of the U.S. Air Force, were identified Friday as two of three pilots freed by North Vietnam. Black was captured last October and Overly last September. The State Departments said the pilots arrived in Laos and were then flown to Thailand.

(AP Wirephoto)



**PILOT FREED** — Navy Ens. David Paul Matheny who enlisted at South Bend, Ind., was one of three U. S. pilots released Friday by the North Vietnamese. Matheny, along with Air Force Capt. Jon D. Black, and Maj. Norris M. Overly was reported to be on their way to a Thailand air base.

(AP Wirephoto)

\* \* \*

## Freed Pilots Arrive in Laos

(Continued From Page One)  
 rigan of Cornell University and Prof. Howard Zinn of Boston University, the two-man peace delegation that flew from New York two weeks ago after the North Vietnamese announced the three fliers would be released as a gesture for the Tet (lunar New Year) holiday.

Dressed in ill-fitting, grey cotton suits and dark blue turtle neck sweaters, the pilots appeared bewildered by the camera lights that flashed on them when they stepped from the ICC plane.

Overly looked haggard. Speaking in a toneless voice, he gave his name rank and serial number, then said, "I was shot down on Sept. 11, 1967. I was treated well, as I observed other captured American pilots being treated. I would like to express my gratitude to the Vietnamese people."

In reply to a question, he repeated that pilots were being treated properly "even to the point of good medical treatment." He said he had injured his back in the crash of his plane at Dong Hoi.

Overly told newsmen he could not explain why he was chosen to be released but that he thought the group was freed "to show sympathy with the peace-loving people of America."

Before the three fliers posed briefly for photographers, Berrigan, Zinn and Sullivan argued for 40 minutes in the ICC plane about where the pilots were to be flown next.

"The Embassy invited the pilots to go home by military plane," Berrigan said. "Sullivan put on some heavy language. I think it was a bad decision."

He accused the ambassador of putting "indirect pressure on the pilots by saying that the State Department, the Department of Defense and the White House preferred that they fly home in a military plane."

"In the end, I suppose," he went on, "it was the pilots' choice. But there was this pressure. It was hard for the pilots to choose otherwise."

Hanoi announced Jan. 27 that it would release the three fliers, saying they "had shown a repentant attitude during the period of detention."



**PILOT FREED** — Navy Ens. David Paul Matheny who enlisted at South Bend, Ind., was one of three U. S. pilots released Friday by the North Vietnamese. Matheny, along with Air Force Capt. Jon D. Black, and Maj. Norris M. Overly was reported to be on their way to a Thailand air base.

(AP Wirephoto)

\* \* \*

## Freed Pilots Arrive in Laos

(Continued From Page One)

rgan of Cornell University and Prof. Howard Zinn of Boston University, the two-man peace delegation that flew from New York two weeks ago after the North Vietnamese announced the three fliers would be released as a gesture for the Tet (lunar New Year) holiday.

Dressed in ill-fitting, grey cotton suits and dark blue turtle neck sweaters, the pilots appeared bewildered by the camera lights that flashed on them when they stepped from the ICC plane.

Overly looked haggard. Speaking in a toneless voice, he gave his name rank and serial number, then said, "I was shot down on Sept. 11, 1967. I was treated well, as I observed other captured American pilots being treated. I would like to express my gratitude to the Vietnamese people."

In reply to a question, he repeated that pilots were being