

# Sister of P.O.W. Thinks He Will Face a 'Shock'

By STEVEN V. ROBERTS  
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SAN JOSE, Calif., Feb. 7 —When Lieut. Comdr. Everett Alvarez went away to war, he believed in his country, and the battles it was fighting in Southeast Asia. Soon he will be coming home, home to a family, and to many countrymen, who feel that his sacrifice of eight and one-half years in a North Vietnamese prison camp was a waste of time.

The Pentagon has said that Lieutenant Commander Alvarez has been a prisoner of war longer than any other American. His sister Delia, described the world he left this way:

"In 1964, when my brother was shot down, there was complete faith in the Government, the Government knew best. The military and the uniform were looked upon with a tremendous amount of respect. All that has changed considerably."

Miss Alvarez, now 31 years old and a graduate student at San Jose State, believes that her brother will have a difficult time, adjusting to that change.

### 'A Cultural Shock'

"Getting used to hearing the telephone ring, or the style of clothes, will be a cultural shock, no doubt," she said one day in the kitchen of her apartment here. "But the most lasting difficulty will be the political and social change, the cynical attitude toward faith in Government, the fact the Congressmen can vote to cut off funds for the war, that type of thing."

Experts agree that returning prisoners are likely to find the political climate a troubling factor in their readjustment to American society. Vietnam, as one former prisoner put it, is "a war without heroes," and families have been warned that after the euphoria of homecoming, some men are likely to feel edpression and futility over the years they have lost.



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**Delia Alvarez, sister of Lieut. Comdr. Everett Alvarez, who is due to return soon, at home yesterday in San Jose, Calif.**

In 1964, Delia Alvarez shared her brother's view of the world. "I believed in the domino theory," she recalled. "To tell you the truth, I never questioned anything."

Today, Miss Alvarez is virtually a full-time antiwar activist. Her parents have also turned against the Government, and her mother has spoken frequently on Spanish-language radio stations, attacking Administration policies.

But the transition was slow and painful. "My brother was the only prisoner for a long time, and the Govern-

ment kept saying they'd get him out soon," said Miss Alvarez. But when the heavy bombing started I really began questioning the credibility of the Government's statement. I really had to stop and think."

"As a P.O.W. family we were really in a rough position," she went on. "If you spoke out against the war, people would think you were unpatriotic, or were being unfaithful to your brother."

After several years, Miss Alvarez quit her job as a social worker and left for Europe. When she returned in 1969, she joined the burgeoning Chicano movement, and that issue fused in her mind with Vietnam.

"The mentality that calls Vietnamese 'gooks' is the same mentality that calls brown people 'spics.' It's the same battle," she said.

Miss Alvarez became increasingly unhappy with the relatives of other prisoners—the "Pentagon princesses," as she calls them—who supported President Nixon's policies of gradual withdrawal. Meeting Jane Fonda helped launch her into a career of public protest, and she was furious over President Nixon's comments about the families of prisoners of war when he announced the cease-fire last month.

"His condescending attitude was an insult to our intelligence," she insisted.

"For years he's told so many lies and been so deceitful, and then he presents himself as if we supported him! He was patting us on the head like little children. 'Now Daddy is going to give you a present.' But we've known all along that Daddy didn't give a damn."

See KCBS News 16 Feb 73,  
and story on Alvarez,  
SFChronicle, same date.

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