

[Report by Jim Hamblin from Travis Air Force Base on short "impromptu" press conference given by Navy Lt. Everett Alvarez, presumably after he had spoken to welcoming crowd. See also Steven V. Roberts, NYTimes 8 Feb, and Charles Howe, SFChronicle 17 Feb 73.]

Question: What kept you going? [Part of question here unintelligible.] You're obviously in good shape. What kept you going?

Alvarez [voice]: What kept me going after being there so long? [Pause.] Prayer. [Pause.] Faith [pause] - in our country. [Seven-second pause, then speaking rapidly:] And faith in my fellow-prisoners.

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[After two more questions the press conference was ended, followed by comment by Hamlin:] That was Lt. Everett Alvarez in a very short news conference that he agreed to out on the flight line, after he had been inside the lounge for a while. The Navy announced that no questions about Hanoi would be entertained by the Lieutenant-Commander, nor answered, and on several questions skirting around the issue of his treatment, Lt. Alvarez had no comment. Of course that's in line with the military edict that no discussion of the treatment of the prisoners will be possible [unintelligible] until after they're all home, the obvious fear being that if any stories of any serious nature get out about what might have gone on, the North Vietnamese might shut off the flow of those prisoners of war coming home.

[End.]

(Over

Tape recording was apparently made at press conference following Alvarez' statement to crowd at ~~in~~ Travis Air Base. The statement, made "in a firm voice," included the phrase "faith in our President."
(SFChronicle 17 Feb 73.)

"... and faith in my fellow prisoners." New Orleans States-Item 17 Feb 73.