

*Family Reunion in
Oak Knoll Hospital*

Alvarez Is in Fine Spirits

The sisters of Lt. Cmdr. Everett Alvarez Jr., who is in Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in Oakland after spending eight and a half years in a North Vietnam prison camp, said their brother is "overwhelmed and happy."

"We want to express to everyone how deeply moved we are and how deeply moved he is by the tremendous amount of people who have sent telegrams and letters," Delia Alvarez told reporters at the hospital yesterday.

She said her brother, the first pilot shot down over North Vietnam, was "really overwhelmed by the publicity he has been given. I don't think he still comprehends the name he has in this country."

Excellent Condition

Hospital doctors said Alvarez, who arrived here Friday, is in excellent medical condition, is in fine spirits, and is only suffering from a "very minor" head cold he picked up in the Philippines.

He had a private reunion with his sisters, and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Alvarez Sr., in the hospital over the weekend.

Differences

"He's extremely witty and has a tremendous sense of humor," his sister Delia told reporters.

Asked how he felt about the anti-war views she expressed during her brother's long confinement, she noted that "there are a lot of things we are going to have to discuss. But he wanted me to express that we are grateful to live in a country where we can respect each other and still have differences of opinion."

"We have an understanding that we need each other. There are a lot of things the family is going to learn about his experience, and that's going to work both ways."

Alvarez, she said, was most aware of the different styles of clothes and shoes. . . "a lot of things we take for granted."

"Not in a Hurry"

She said her brother did not talk about his confinement, and had no immediate plans for the future. "He's not in a hurry. We're just beginning to discuss the future."

Madeleine, the pilot's other sister, said she was only 12 years old when her brother left for Vietnam. "Now it's like getting used to a whole new person," she said. "He's like a stranger. I hadn't known him that well before . . . but I hope to now."



FAMILY PORTRAIT — Lt. Cmdr. Everett Alvarez Jr., the American held captive the longest by the North Vietnamese, joins his family in their first portrait in 8½ years. Seated on either side of Alvarez are his parents, Soledad and Everett Sr.; standing are his sisters Madeleine (left) and Delia.