

Rescue over Laos

Downed pilot reeled in

TAN SON NHUT - Capt. Meldon H. Long III was rescued just before dusk March 2 after he was forced to bail out of his OV-10 aircraft in the lower panhandle of Laos.

Captain Long was flying a reconnaissance mission for the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron out of Da Nang AB, when his aircraft was hit by ground fire. Unable to nurse the OV-10 back to Da Nang he bailed out around 5 p.m.

The captain landed in a tree about two miles from a road. His helmet and glasses were torn off as he descended through the branches, stopping just 10 feet above ground. He lowered himself and ran for cover. "There was no place to hide," he recalled.

Thirty minutes after bailing out, he reached a cluster of trees and took time to make radio contact with a FAC pilot in the area.

Meanwhile, an HC-130 King of the 79th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron (ARRS), which had been in pursuit of Captain Long's aircraft as it struggled towards Da Nang, called in a rescue force of A-1 Skyraiders and HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant helicopters from the 40th ARRS.

The Sandy pilots located Captain Long and also discovered enemy ground troops in the area. Before the rescue could be effected, the A-1s started enemy forces nearby with the aid of Captain Long, who pinpointed their positions.

When the area appeared safe, the Skyraiders led the rescue helicopter to the pick up point. The A-1s formed their "Ung Chai" protective flight pattern around the helicopter as it

Capt. Dale E. Stowell, captain and personnel specialists TSgt. John L. Young, and Sgt. Paul C. Perry.

'Hello, mom? yea, it's me!'

TAN SON NHUT - American servicemen have placed more than 25,000 calls home in the last six months from the Special Services "Call Home Center" and the NARS (Military Affiliated Radio System) facility here.

The Call Home Center, which opened Sept. 1, 1971, has placed 17,134 telephone calls by servicemen from Tan Son Nhut to the United States, Canada, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Mexico.

TSgt. Ken Shalenderger, who manages the center for Special Services, expects an upswing in the number of calls home during the next six months, possibly as many as 30,000. "We will get more calls as we become better known at home," said the sergeant.

The center was established to provide personnel here with a more convenient means of calling home. Having a center on Tan Son Nhut also precludes their having to go all the way to the United States Organization (USOs) downtown.

Calls originating from the center here are routed through the 15th Communications Squadron, which is